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*Love to Christ a necessary Qualification
of a Minister of the Gospel.*

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A

S E R M O N

PREACHED at the

ORDINATION

OF THE

Rev. Mr. JAMES ROOKER,

At Bridport, October 16, 1751.

By JOHN LAVINGTON, Jun.

Together with an

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE by Samuel Hayward;

Mr. Rooker's CONFESSION of FAITH;

And a CHARGE delivered by Richard Pearfall.

*Published at the Request of the Ministers and People,
who were present.*

L O N D O N :

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and G. KEITH at Mercers-Chapel, Cheapside. 1752.

(Price One Shilling.)

There is only a necessary qualification
of a Minister of the Gospel.

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

Rev. Mr. JAMES ROOPER,

At Belfast, Oct. 16, 1758.

By JOHN LIVINGSTON, Pastor

Together with an

Account of the Discourse by Samuel M.

the Author's Letter to the Editors of the

the Glasgow Gazette, by Richard L.

What is the Nature of the Gospel and the

the true Gospel.

L O N D O N

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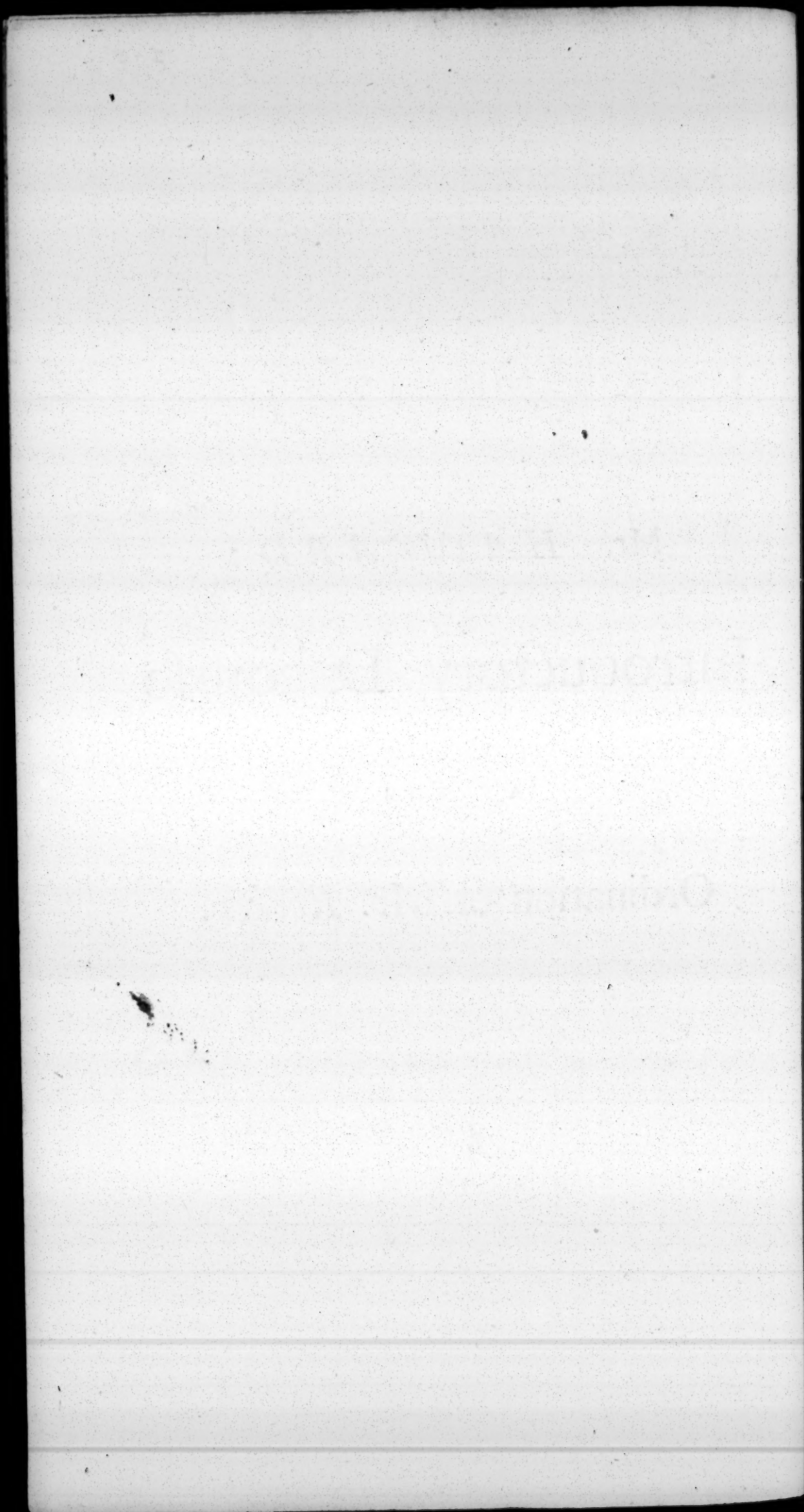
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Mr. *HAYWARD's*
Introductory Discourse

AT THE

Ordination of Mr. *Rocker.*

B





INTRODUCTION.

IT is the undoubted Right of a Gospel-Church to chuse its own Officers: This is a Grant given them by our Lord Jesus Christ, their great King and Head, upon whom the Church itself is founded, and by whom its various Officers are furnished with Gifts and Graces, by which they are fitted for those peculiar Services to which they are called; and in the Exercise of which, they are made the happy Instruments of advancing the Redeemer's Kingdom. These are Privileges which are trifled with, and but lightly esteemed by too many, to the great Decline of true Religion, the Ruin of immortal Souls, the great Discredit of the Christian Character, and the fatal Spread of Prophaneness and Infidelity. — We have Reason therefore to reckon it not amongst the least of our Mercies, that we have Liberty to act agreeably to the Gospel-Rule; and that there are Churches who are filled with a noble Zeal for the Purity of Gospel-Doctrine and Discipline, walking in the Order Christ has established, and maintaining with a becoming Steadiness and Resolution their invaluable Rights and Privileges. And it should equally engage our Thankfulness, that the great Shepherd is raising up Ministers, full of Love to their great Master, a tender Concern for immortal Souls, and a

Zeal for the glorious Truths of the Gospel ; and that he is sending them out, to the Edification, Encrease, and Comfort of his Churches.

At the first Institution of a Gospel-Church, there were extraordinary and ordinary Officers appointed. The extraordinary Officers were *Apostles, Evangelists, and Prophets* ; these were furnished with extraordinary Gifts and Graces, to fit them for the important Work to which they were called ; and ceased, when the great Ends were answered for which they were appointed. — The ordinary Officers were to continue to the End of Time ; when Christ will deliver up his mediatorial Kingdom to the Father, Ordinances shall cease, and God shall be all in all. The Chief of these is the *Pastor*, who is represented under a variety of Characters in Scripture, such as *Bishop, Elder, or Presbyter, &c.* all which are Names common to the same Office ; and point out its peculiar Dignity, as well as the various Branches of that Duty that is annexed to it.

Many by too inattentively reading the New Testament, are ready to apprehend that the Word *Bishop*, which they find so often repeated in it, points to that Office, in which an unwarrantable Jurisdiction is exercised, and which raises Persons to Wealth and earthly Honour ; whereas this is of mere human Establishment, and has no Foundation in the Word of God. A Gospel-Bishop in the early Ages of Christianity, had the Care and Inspection of one Church only : His Office was not attended with great Accumulations of Wealth and Glory ; nor was he distinguished by pompous and lordly Titles. The Office of a Bishop indeed, considering its Nature, and the Ends and Designs of its Institution, is no ways mean and despicable, but truly honourable, and renders those who are enabled

enabled to discharge it with Faithfulness worthy of the greatest Esteem. What can be more honourable than to be employed about the everlasting Welfare of immortal Souls? Gospel-Ministers are Ambassadors of God, they receive their Commissions from him, and they are sent by him with Messages of Peace and Salvation to guilty Creatures: They are Shepherds, whose peculiar Business it is, diligently to watch over their respective Flocks, feed them with Knowledge and Understanding, restore the Wanderers, strengthen the Weak and Feeble, and train them up for a better, even a glorious World. — They are set for the Defence of the Gospel, and are Instruments which God makes use of for the Conversion and Salvation of Souls. In fine — they are designed *for the perfecting the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ,* Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13. How truly noble then is this Office? and how thankful should those be who enjoy the Advantages of it —

It is a dreadful Curse which God threatened, and of which we have an Account in *Amos viii. 11. Behold the Days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a Famine in the Land, not a Famine of Bread nor a Thirst for Water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord.* The Want of a Gospel-Ministry is the greatest Affliction a People or Nation can be exercised with; it is Matter of Lamentation that it should have become the Object of so much Contempt and Scorn. What must we ascribe it to, but to the Ignorance, Bigotry, and Avarice, Prophaneness, and even Infidelity of too many of those who appear in the sacred Character? — When
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Self-Interest is the governing Principle from whence Persons act ; when Love to the World is the chief Spring and Motive ; in fine — when those enter upon this important Work, who are insensible of its Nature, are Strangers to the Power of the divine Life, and consequently have no Call from God to appear as Ministers ; no Wonder that he withholds his Blessing ; they fall into Contempt, the Gospel is despised, and Infidelity and Immorality so generally abound.

Unless we are called to the Ministry by our glorious Master, we cannot expect his Presence with us, nor any Success in the Work. Of this Call of his Ministers he gives sufficient Indications, by those Gifts and Graces with which he furnishes them, and fits them for the Work they are engaged in, and by the Call they receive from his Churches, acting in his Name, and according to the Rules he has prescribed —

Such we hope is the Person God has set over this Church. We doubt not but his Heart is firmly attached to the Interest of his great Master, and filled with a real Concern for immortal Souls ; and we rejoice with you, that God has been pleased to put so happy a Conclusion to your late Difficulties, and to set over you a Pastor to watch over your Souls, to administer the Ordinances of Grace, and to feed you with the Provision of the Gospel.

We are come this Day, not to give our dear Brother a Commission, or proper Authority to go in and out before you as your Pastor, we having no such Power lodged with us for that Purpose ; but we are come to hold Communion with you as a Church of Christ, to commit him and you to the Care of the great Shepherd ; to entreat his Presence with, and his Blessing upon you, and to put you in mind of your respective Duties to one another.

ther. And that we may the more chearfully discharge these various Duties, I must desire one of this Church, in the Name of the rest, to declare your Call of our dear Brother to the pastoral Office, and the Steps you have taken towards a Settlement with him. —

This was accordingly done by a Member of the Church — as follows —

“ It is about nine Years since we gave up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another, desiring to walk in all the Ordinances of the Lord, agreeably to his Appointment. In this Space of Time, we have been exercised with various Trials, were frequently destitute of a Minister to dispense the Word of Life to us ; yet God who is rich in Mercy, has at Times sent his Servants amongst us, to our great Support and Comfort : In this unsettled State, we have often sought to the Lord by Fasting and Prayer, that he would set over us a Pastor after his own Heart ; that we might have the Word and Ordinances administered to us, hoping thereby to be built up a Church of the living God. Our Endeavours to obtain so desirable a Blessing, have often been frustrated, till about a Year and half ago, when the Rev. Mr. *Rooker* was recommended to us, as a sound, serious Gospel-Minister. We then applied to him, requesting that he would come and preach amongst us ; which he did for six Lord's Days ; by which Means we had some Experience of his Abilities for the Ministry ; and observing in him a serious Carriage and Behaviour, agreeable to his Profession, and answerable to the Character we had received of him ; the Church was called together to know their Sentiments concerning him, and all of us manifested our Approbation of him, and unanimously gave him a Call to the Pastoral Office amongst us. Upon his professing

feſſing (to our great Satisfaction) his Acceptance of the Call, we jointly appointed this Day for his Ordination. And I do now in the Name, and by the Order of this Church, in the Preſence of theſe Witneſſes, reiterate the Call to the Rev. Mr. *Rooker*, to accept of, and take upon him the paſtoral Charge of this Church.”

Which was done by Mr. *Rooker* as follows.

“ When I firſt received the Invitation from this Church, having got the beſt Information I could of the State of their Affairs, I came amongſt them for ſome Weeks, in which Time the Church gave me a Call to the paſtoral Office. As this appeared to me to be a Matter of great Importance, I thought it neceſſary to take proper Time to conſider the Affair ſeriously, to ſeek to God for Direction, and to obſerve the Path which Providence ſhould point out to me, before I gave any Answer to their Requeſts. After an impartial Enquiry into the Mind and Will of God concerning this momentous Affair, I could not but think it my Duty (at leaſt) to return to this Congregation. Since my Return to, and farther Acquaintance with them, the Path of Duty appearing to me to be ſtill more plain and clear, I at length ſignified my Acceptance of the Call of this Church; upon which we jointly appointed this Day for my publick entering into a paſtoral Relation to them. And I do now ſolemnly recognize my Acceptance of this Call, and engage in an humble Dependance upon the Aſſiſtance and Grace of the Spirit of God, to perform the ſeveral Parts of the paſtoral Office, according to the Direction that Chriſt has given in his Word; deſiring the Supplications of all preſent, that I may obtain Mercy of the Lord to be found faithful.”

Now

Now my dear Brother, I must desire you to declare publicly your Acceptance of this Call, and what determined you thereto ———

This was done *accordingly by Mr. Rooker.*

Having thus declared your Acceptance of the Call of this Church, I must desire you to give us a free and full Confession of your Faith.

Which was accordingly done.

My dear Brother, you have this Day made a publick Confession of your Faith in the great Articles of the Christian Religion ; Truths of the utmost Importance, worthy of our highest Veneration and Esteem. They are Doctrines which are in every Respect calculated to promote the Glory of God, and secure the everlasting Salvation of the Sinner ; are the grand Pillars upon which the Church and every Christian's Comfort are built, against which the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail ; and which ought to be more frequently the Subjects of our Preaching and Conversation : Hearers in general are too defective in their Knowledge of the Gospel, are incapable of distinguishing between Truth and Error, are consequently easily led into Mistakes, and want that Zeal which every Professor of Religion ought to discover for the Gospel. This is not only to be imputed to the Carelessness and Indolence of Hearers, but in some Measure to the Corruptness, Ignorance, and Negligence of Ministers. Moral Preaching is become too much the Fashion of the present Age ; an Harangue upon some Christian Virtue, composed of well connected Sentences, and the Flourishes of Rhetorick, is all that is heard from many Pulpits. This has been the unhappy Means of introducing Infidelity and Immorality amongst us, as the grand Foundation, upon which all true Gospel-Holiness is built, is neglected. How necessary is it therefore my Brethren, that, as Ministers of Christ,

we contend for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, hold fast that Form of sound Words we have heard, and maintain with a noble Zeal the declining Cause of our glorious Redeemer. Whilst some have forsaken the Truth as it is in Jesus, others are cold and lukewarm in the Defence of it; by which Means the Enemy triumphs, and the best of Causes is exposed to publick Ridicule; but few having the Resolution to withstand the Opposition they meet with, or willing to go under the Disgrace of *Enthusiasts*, *Antinomians*, &c. Names which are invidiously given to those that believe the glorious Truths we have this Day heard.

Whilst many are treating the Word *Mystery* with Contempt, apprehending it beneath the Dignity of a rational Creature to believe what he cannot comprehend, and therefore despise the mysterious Truths of Christianity; let us continue firm in our Belief of them, considering that we act a rational and becoming Part therein, because we find them to be Matter of Revelation. In fine, let us never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for Experience, as well as the Word of God, tells us, that that, and that only, is *the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth*. It is the greatest Comfort of ourselves and our Hearers, in Life, and will be their and our only Support when Nature faints, and a vast Eternity appears in view. Let us behave with a becoming Boldness and Intrepidity in our Master's Service; and may nothing be able to move us from the Hope of the Gospel, ever remembering that it is a good Cause in which we are embarked, and will stand by us when every Thing else will fail. And may you my dear Brother, to whom God has committed the Treasure of the Gospel, faithfully dispense it to those under your Care; may you be enabled diligently to watch over that Flock you have taken the Charge and Oversight of.

Finally,

Finally, may you as an Officer in the Church, keep your Station, face every Enemy with Courage and Resolution, and maintain your Allegiance to your great Master. May you and this Church walk together in the Fear of the Lord, and in the Comforts of the Holy Ghost, and be edified and multiplied. May the Pleasure of the Lord prosper in your Hands, and a numerous Seed be raised up under your Ministrations to our great Redeemer, that you may have many to be your Joy and your Crown of Rejoicing in the great Day of the Lord. Thus may we all pray, and add to it our joint and hearty *Amen*.



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CONFESSION OF FAITH,

Delivered by

JAMES ROOKER,

AT HIS

ORDINATION.



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CONFESSION of FAITH, &c.

AS it is justly expected, that on this solemn Occasion I should deliver a Confession of my Faith; therefore, being conscious of my own Weakness, and having my Dependance on the Aids of the Holy Spirit to enable me to persevere, I solemnly declare, in the Presence of God, Angels, and Men, that the following Doctrines are the real Sentiments of my Heart, and what I intend, as the Lord shall spare and assist me, to make the Subjects of my future Ministrations.

I. The Light of Nature assures me, that there is One, and One only, Living and True God; who is an Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable Spirit; Invisible, Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Incomprehensible; of unsearchable Wisdom, boundless and irresistible Power; of unspotted Purity, and inexhaustible Goodness; most Holy, most Merciful, most Just, and most True; who is the only Object of religious Worship; of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all Things. The Necessity of the Existence of some first Cause, the wonderful Frame of the Heavens, containing
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so many beautiful Lights, with their regular, constant, and harmonious Motions, and all so exceeding useful ; the admirable Formation of the Earth on which we dwell ; the Riches and Furniture of it ; the innumerable Creatures that are around Us, and the grand Provision that is made for them ; the curious Contrivance of Man's Body, consisting of so many Parts, Joints, and Vessels, and all fitted to such excellent Designs and Uses ; and especially the Soul of Man, endued with such remarkable Faculties, as Understanding, Reason, Will, Memory, and Conscience ; all, as with one Voice proclaim, that there is an Eternal, and most Perfect Being, that is the first Cause, and Former, and Preserver of all these Things. *For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead* (1).

II. But though the Light of Nature, and every thing around us, declare the Existence of the infinitely Perfect God, yet for a more full and clear Knowledge of what he is, of what he has done for us, in what Manner he is to be worshipped, and of the peculiar Obligations to Duty, we are indebted to a Revelation from God : And to this we are entirely obliged for any Discovery of the Operations of the Wisdom, Power, and Grace of God in favour of fallen Man ; for the Certainty that he would forgive sinful Creatures ; and for the Knowledge of the Way in which he would accept them. Such a Revelation, I believe, God hath, in infinite Mercy, granted ; and that it is only to be found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

III. I believe that the holy Bible contains a full and perfect Discovery of the revealed Will of God. The Dignity, Spirituality, and Purity of the Matter of the Scriptures ; the Majesty and

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(1) Rom. i. 20.

Sublimity of their Stile; the Harmony of their Parts, though wrote by different Persons, at different Places, and in different Ages; the Scope and Design of the whole, which is to give all Glory to God; moreover, the remarkable Prophecies that they contain, Part of which are accomplished, and Part are fulfilling at this Day, and remain to be fulfilled; the astonishing Miracles, by which the holy Writers confirmed their Divine Mission; the Preservation of the Scripture to this Day, notwithstanding the Wit and Malice of subtle and powerful Adversaries have been most strenuously employed against it; and the Efficacy it hath had, through the Blessing of God, upon the Hearts and Consciences of Men, in the Conviction and Conversion of Sinners, and in the Comfort and Edification of Saints; (these Considerations) are to me convincing Proofs, that the Scripture of the Old and New Testament *is given by Inspiration of God* *; that it is not the Fiction, or Contrivance of, nor proceeds from *the Will of Man*; but *holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* †.

IV. I believe, that the Scripture, surrounded with these incontestable Proofs of it's divine Authority, is to be received and cordially embraced by us, as the Rule of our Faith and Practice. Whatever Doctrine will not bear the Trial of that sacred Standard, I desire to renounce and reject it: And whatever Truth it reveals, that is expressly mentioned in, or by just and necessary Consequences deducible from it, however disagreeable it may be to corrupt Nature, I desire, with the utmost readiness, to receive and embrace it; remembering those terrible Words near the Close of the Canon of Scripture; *If any Man shall add unto these Things, God shall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book: And if any Man*
D shall

* 2 Tim. iii. 16.

† 2 Pet. i. 21.

*shall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book *.*

After a serious, and (I would hope) an impartial humble Search into the Book of God, and seeking the Assistance and Direction of the Spirit of God, I receive upon the Authority of Scripture the following Articles, and desire that I may experience the Power of them more and more in my own Soul.

V. I believe, that there are *three Persons* in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these Three are *one God*. As there are distinct personal Characters and Properties applied to each of them, they are with great Propriety called Three distinct Persons. And as the same incommunicable Attributes, glorious Works, and supreme Worship are ascribed to them, I believe, that these Three Persons are one God, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory. How the One God is distinguished into Three Persons, is an unsearchable Mystery. But as there are many things in Nature, which we cannot fully understand, though we know the Truth of them; and as the Eternity and Immensity of God are universally believed, though they cannot be comprehended by us finite Creatures; I see no Reason why the great Doctrine of the Trinity should be rejected, when it is so expressly contained in the Word of God, and is of so much Importance in the Christian Faith. Therefore, bowing myself at the Footstool of the incomprehensible Jehovah, I cheerfully assent to the Declaration that he has given of himself; that *there are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One* †.

VI.

* Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

† 1 John v. 7.

VI. I believe, that God doth not only *foreknow* all Things by an Act of his Understanding, but that by an Act of his Will he hath *fore-ordained*, for his own Glory, whatsoever comes to pass in the natural and moral World ; decreeing to permit the Evil, and to accomplish the Good : it being *the Purpose of him who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will** : Yet so as not to make God the Author of Sin on the one hand, or to infringe the Liberty of the Creature on the other. Particularly, I believe on the Testimony of Scripture, that God hath from all Eternity elected some of the Race of Mankind, in Christ their Covenant-head, to eternal Life, and to Faith and Holiness as the means of it ; not on the Account of Faith or Works foreseen, but out of his mere good Pleasure. *According as he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love : Having predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will*†. And with respect to the rest of Mankind that are not the Objects of this blessed Choice, God hath in adorable Sovereignty, whereby he extends or withholds Favour as he pleaseth, passed them by, and for their wilful Transgressions hath decreed to punish them. *What if God willing to shew his Wrath, and to make his Power known, endured with much long-suffering, the Vessels of Wrath fitted to Destruction*‡.

VII. In the Beginning God created all Things out of Nothing by the Word of his Power, and that very good. *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast* ||. The Heavens, with all the glorious Inhabitants of the upper World, those shining Luminaries, the Sun, Moon, and

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Stars ;

* Eph. i. 11.

† Eph. i. 4, 5.

‡ Rom. ix. 22.

|| Psa. xxxiii. 9.

Stars; the Earth on which we dwell, with the variety of Creatures and rich Furniture upon it are the Works of God. *It is he that sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth; that stretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and spreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in* §. He preserves the World in being, *upholding all Things by the Word of his Power* †: And he governs the Universe. *The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all* *. His Eyes are in every Place, beholding the Evil and the Good. And his Providence extends not only to his more noble Works, but also to the most minute Parts of the Creation. Even the *Hairs of our Head* and the *falling Sparrow* are obvious to his Notice and Regard. The Things, which to us are accidental, are under the Direction of his wise Providence, and are ordered for his Glory: So that even an Arrow shot out of a Bow at a venture shall be under his immediate Direction, and fulfil his Purpose †.

VIII. After the other Works of Creation, the Scripture informs us, that God made Man, with a Body of an admirable Structure, *fearfully and wonderfully made, and curiously wrought*; and with an immortal Soul, capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying his Creator. *God created Man in his own Image* ‡, in a holy and happy State, without any Darkness upon his Understanding, free from any corrupt Biass upon his Will, and without any Irregularity in his Affections. The Law of God was wrote upon his Heart, and he had Power to perform it. God gave him Dominion over the Earth, and the innumerable Creatures around him; fixing him in a delightful Situation; and honoured him with his special Pre-

fence,

§ Isai. xl. 22.

† Heb. i. 3.

* Psal. ciii. 19.

‡ 2 Chron. xviii. 33, compared with v. 27. † Gen. i. 26.

sence, and Communion with himself. Yet he was made a *mutable* Creature ; so that there was in him a *Possibility* of falling from his Holiness and Happiness.

IX. I believe, that when God had created Man, he entered into a Covenant with him, considered, not merely as a single Person, but as the Head and Representative of all his Posterity that should descend from him by ordinary Generation, (he being in that respect the *Figure, or Type, of him that was to come* * :) in which Covenant the Lord promised *Adam* and his Posterity with him Life upon condition of his perfect Obedience, and threatened Death in case of Disobedience. As a Trial of his Obedience, God forbid him to eat of the Fruit of a certain Tree in the midst of the Garden of *Eden*, called *the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* †. Therefore, upon his breaking the Condition of the Covenant, he fell from God, and we with him. So that by the *Disobedience* of *Adam* our Representative, we his natural Descendants were made Sinners ‡ : *We are shapen in Iniquity and conceived in Sin* || ; and are by Nature the Children of Wrath even as others §. These awful, humbling Truths the Word of God holds forth ; that by *one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin ; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned* |||.

X. I believe, that God might, without any Injustice, have left all Mankind to feel the dismal Effects of their Fall in *Adam*, without providing a Remedy, as he spared not the Angels that sinned †. But, out of his infinite Goodness and Mercy, he promised to our first Parents a Seed that should bruise the Serpent's Head ||* ; and discovered to them

* Rom. v. 14. † Gen. ii. 17. ‡ Rom. v. 19.
 || Psa. li. 5. § Eph. ii. 3. ||| Rom. v. 12. † 2 Pet. ii. 4.
 ||* Gen. iii. 15.

them a Covenant of Grace, into which he entered with Christ, and in him with all the Elect : wherein God the Son, as Mediator, was to make Satisfaction for the Sins of his People ; God the Father was to support him in his Undertaking, and give him a Seed as the Reward of his Sufferings ; and God the Holy Ghost was to apply the Benefit purchased by Christ. To this blessed Covenant all that believe in Jesus can flee, to be delivered from the revenging Arm of Justice : And from hence may be derived unspeakable Comfort and compleat Satisfaction.

XI. According to this eternal Covenant, *when the Fulness of the Time* appointed for his Incarnation *was come, God sent forth his Son**, to take upon him our Nature. In an amazing and mysterious manner *God was manifest in the Flesh†*. The Human Nature was united to the Divine in the Person of Christ. He was Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh ; and in common with us, was exposed to all the Infirmities of Life, Sin only excepted. And thus being both God and Man, he was perfectly qualified to be a Mediator betwixt the offended Deity and sinful rebellious Man.

XII. As Christ was made under the Law, so by fulfilling all Righteousness, *he magnified the Law, and made it honourable*. His Life was a perfect Transcript of the holy Law of God. *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth†*. By a Life of sinless Obedience, and by his meritorious Sufferings, he performed, as the Surety of his People, all that the Law required and Justice demanded : So that by his *Obedience many shall be made righteous* ||: Which perfect Righteousness is made over to them by Imputation upon their closing with Christ, and thereby takes away
their

* Gal. iv. 4.
|| Rom. v. 19.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16.

† 1 Pet. ii. 22.

their Guilt, and entitles them to eternal Life and Glory.

XIII. I believe, that Christ died as a Sacrifice for the Sins of his People ; that, after his remaining in the State of the Dead for awhile, where he saw no Corruption, he arose for their Justification § ; and having *shewed himself alive* to his Disciples *by many infallible Proofs* †, he ascended in a triumphant manner into Heaven ||| ; where *he ever lives* in Glory, *to make Intercession* with God *||, that all those Benefits, which he purchased for his People by his Obedience and Sufferings, might be applied to them.

XIV. I believe, that all, that are chosen to Salvation, are in God's own Time *effectually called* by the Holy Spirit, out of a State of Sin, in which they were in common with others, to a State of Grace. Hereby their Understandings are enlightened to see their Sin, Danger, and Misery ; and their Hearts are changed ; their Wills subdued ; and their Affections spiritualized : they are persuaded and enabled to hate all Sin, to leave it's Service, and to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, as he is offered in the Gospel. So great and glorious is the Change, that they are said to be *born of the Spirit* ‡, and to be *new Creatures : old Things are past away, behold all Things are become new* †. And all this is effected not by their own Will or Might, but by the powerful Energy of the Holy Ghost. They are *spiritually born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God* *.

XV. I believe, that *whom God hath called, them he also justified* †. Hereby God of his free Grace absolves them from the Guilt of Sin, and pronounces

§ Rom. iv. 25.

*|| Heb. ix. 24.

* John i. 13.

† Acts i. 3.

‡ John iii. 6.

|| Rom. viii. 30.

||| Luke xxiv.

† 2 Cor. v. 17.

nounces them righteous, not for any thing in them, but for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them and received by Faith; *being justified freely by the Grace of God through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ* †. This, I apprehend, is decreed from Eternity, and actually passes upon them on their believing in Christ, when a new Nature is implanted, and so by the Divine Settlement a new Relation is produced.

XVI. Those whom God has justified, he takes into his Family by *Adoption*, and calls them his *Sons and Daughters*: so that they are *no more Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God* ||. He gives them the Privileges of Children, and confers such Dignity upon them, that they are called *Heirs of God and Joint-heirs with Jesus Christ* §.

XVII. They that are effectually called have a Work of *Sanctification* wrought in them by the Spirit: For *God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit and Belief of the Truth* |||. Hereby they are renewed in the whole Man after the Image of God, and are enabled to *put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness* †. They have the Seeds of all Grace put into their Hearts; and they are enabled to mortify their Corruptions, to die unto Sin, and to rise to Newness of Life, making a Progress in every Christian Grace. The Lord Jesus gave himself for the Church, not only to deliver it from the Guilt of Sin, but to *purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works* *; and that he might at last present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish †. XVIII.

† Rom. iii. 24.

|| Eph. ii. 19.

§ Rom. viii. 17.

||| 2 Thef. ii. 13.

† Eph. iv. 24.

* Tit. ii. 14.

† Eph. v. 27.

XVIII. Saving Faith is a Grace wrought in the Heart by the *mighty Power* of God *; which includes in it, not only an Assent to all the Declarations in the Word concerning Christ, and particularly that he is the Messiah, the Saviour of Sinners; but also the receiving him in all his Offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, and a relying on him alone for Salvation. Hereby the Sinner being convinced of his lost Condition, and the Ability that there is in Christ, and in him alone to save him, builds upon him his Hopes of Forgiveness and Acceptance with God. Such a Soul desires with the Apostle to be found in Christ, not placing any Dependence upon his *own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith* †.

XIX. True Repentance is a Grace of the Operation of the Holy Spirit; by which the Sinner being thoroughly convinced of the Danger, Vileness, and Odiousness of his Sins, and apprehending the Mercy of God in Christ, he grieves before the Lord, and abhors his Sins, turns from them to God, and renounces every evil way, resolving and endeavouring through Divine Grace, constantly to walk with God in a way of new Obedience. For the Grace of God teacheth us, *that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World* ‡.

XX. Good Works, though no ways meritorious, yet are the genuine Fruits of true Faith. And as they are necessary; for *these Things* the Ministers of Christ are to *affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works* ||: so, being performed in Obedience

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dience

* Eph. i. 19.

† Phil. iii. 9.

‡ Tit. ii. 12.

|| Tit. iii. 8.

dience to God's Command, they are very useful. For (to use the Words of the venerable Assembly, in which I heartily agree) *by them Believers manifest their Thankfulness, strengthen their Assurance, edify their Brethren, adorn the Profession of the Gospel, stop the Mouths of the Adversaries, and glorify God, whose Workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto; that having their Fruit unto Holiness, they may have the end eternal Life.*

XXI. I believe, that all that are justified by the Grace of God, and sanctified by the Spirit, *shall be kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation* *. As Perseverance is the Duty, so it is the Privilege of the Saints. Though Satan, the World, and corrupt Nature oppose the spiritual Principle, so that sometimes the People of God fall into Sin: yet, as they were loved with the special Love of the unchangeable God; as they are united to Christ by Faith; and have the *anointing* of the Spirit, and the *Seed* of God remaining in them †; and as they are taken into that *Covenant*, which is stiled *Everlasting* ‡; I believe, that none that have received saving Grace, shall fall finally; *being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good Work in you, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ* ||. The Lord Jesus will not lose the numerous Seed, that are the Fruit of his Death; but will give unto them *eternal Life*; having promised, that *they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his Hands* §.

XXII. True Believers, from a Progress of Sanctification in their Souls, from the Assistance the Spirit gives them to enable them to discern in themselves those Graces to which the Promises of Life

are

* 1 Pet. i. 5.

† 1 John iii. 9. with ch. ii. 27.

‡ Heb. xiii. 20.

|| Phil. i. 6.

§ John x. 28.

are made, and from the Testimony that he sometimes gives to their Spirits, *that they are the Children of God**, may know, *that they have passed from Death to Life*†, and be infallibly assured of their Salvation. Yet I cannot by any Means think, that Assurance is essential to a Believer; as God's dear Children have complained of the Hidings of his Face, and a great Store of Gospel-Promises are treasured up for the Support and Comfort of doubting Saints; and as it is said, *In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise*§.

XXIII. All that profess Faith in Christ, and walk accordingly, wherever they are dispersed thro' the World, are, I apprehend, the Visible Church, who have Christ alone for their Head and Lawgiver. The Father gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church||. He alone is Lord of the Conscience; and all others that assume this Authority, are Usurpers in Christ's Spiritual Kingdom.

XXIV. A particular Church is a Society of Christians, uniting together, to walk in all the Ordinances of the Lord, to strengthen each other's Hands, to bear one another's Burdens, and to promote mutually their Spiritual Welfare. And these have Liberty to chuse their own Officers, to admit Members that are duly qualified into their Communion, to admonish in it, and exclude from it those that walk unworthily; being herein to observe the Rules that Christ has given them in his Word.

XXV. Christ hath, by himself or his Apostles, appointed Pastors, or Bishops, for the Spiritual, and Deacons for the temporal Affairs of the Church†. The Pastors are *for the perfecting of the Saints*,
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for

* Rom. viii. 16. † 1 John iii. 14. § Eph. i. 13. || Eph. i. 22. † Acts vi. 3.

*for the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ**. They are to preach the Word, to guide the People over whom the Lord places them, in the Name and Fear of God, endeavouring to build them up in Faith, Holiness, and Joy, and to administer the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and they are to continue successively to the *End of the World* §.

XXVI. Baptism is an Ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein the *washing with Water in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, doth signify the Remission of Sins by the Blood of Christ, and the Renovation of our Natures by the Holy Spirit. Hereby we are solemnly admitted into the Visible Church, being *All baptized into One Body*, and are laid under Engagements to be the Lord's. This Sacrament, I believe, is to be administered to those that profess their Faith in Christ; and also to their Infant-Seed; as the Privileges under the New Testament are as extensive as those under the Old; and as it is expressly said, *The Promise is unto you, and to your Children* ||.

XXVII. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament instituted by Christ for Believers to commemorate the Love of their Dying Lord, who hath said, *This do in Remembrance of me* †. The Breaking of the Bread represents Jesus Christ wounded and crucified for Sin: The Pouring out of the Wine represents Christ's Blood shed upon the Cross: By receiving the Bread and Wine according to Christ's Appointment, Christians, thro' Faith, feed spiritually upon his Body and Blood; their Faith and other Graces are increased; their Communion with one another is strengthened; they testify, and renew their Thankfulness, and solemnly bind them-

selves

* Eph. iv. 12.

§ Mat. xxviii. 20.

|| AAs ii. 39.

† Luk xxii. 19.

selves afresh, to live to the Praise of their dear Redeemer.

XXVIII. I believe, that *it is appointed unto Men once to die* ||. At Death the Body moulders into its primitive Dust, and thus will continue till the Morning of the Resurrection. But *the Spirit returns unto God who gave it* §, to receive the Sentence of Approbation or Condemnation. And accordingly the Souls of Believers do immediately pass into Glory, and are received into the Paradise of God; but the Souls of the Wicked are thrust down into Regions of Darknes, to endure eternal Misery.

XXIX. The Scripture assures Us, that God hath *appointed a Day*, that is at present known only to himself, but will certainly and shortly take Place, *in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained* ||*. When that delightful, dreadful Day approaches, *the Sun shall be turned into Darknes, and the Moon into Blood* *. *The Stars shall fall from Heaven; the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken* †, and *the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat* ||†. The Lord Jesus shall descend *in the Clouds with Power and great Glory* *§, surrounded with all his holy Angels. The mighty Judge shall *sit upon the Throne of his Glory* **, to call the whole World to Judgment. In order hereto, *there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and the Unjust* |||. Upon the Archangel's sounding the solemn Trumpet, the Voice thereof shall penetrate the dark Caverns of the Earth, and the deep Recesses of the Sea, and shall be heard in all the Regions of the Dead. The innumerable Race of *Adam* shall start out of their Graves; and every Spirit shall be re-united

|| Heb. ix. 27. § Eccl. xii. 7. ||* Acts xvii. 31. * Joel ii. 31. † Mat. xxiv. 29. ||† 2 Pet. iii. 10. *§ Mat. xxiv. 31. ** Mat. xxv. 31. ||| Acts xxiv. 15.

united to its own proper Body. All this vast Host shall then present themselves before their Judge: *The Books shall be opened, and the Dead shall be judged out of those Things which are written in the Books according to their Works* †. The final Sentence shall then be pronounced: To the Righteous on the Right-Hand shall proceed from the Saviour's Lips those joyful Words, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World* *. But the Wicked on the Left-Hand shall be forced to hear those Words, infinitely more terrible than Thunder, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels* §. Upon the pronouncing this irreverfible Sentence, the Wicked shall be immediately driven from the Presence of the Lord into endless Mifery: But the Righteous shall return in Triumph with their Saviour, to receive their eternal Crown of Glory, and to be put in full Poffeffion of the *Inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*.

These Things I believe, (Lord help my Unbelief) defiring to live them as a Christian, and preach them as a Minister of Chrift; and request the Prayers of this Affembly, that I may difcharge the folemn Work with all Faithfulnefs.

† Rev. xx. 12. * Mat. xxv. 34. § Mat. xxv. 42.

Mr.

Mr. *LAVINGTON*'S CHARGE

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF

Mr. *ROOKER*.



Love to Christ a necessary Qualification for a Minister of the Gospel.

JOHN xxi. 17.

He saith unto him the third Time, Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third Time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all Things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my Sheep.

THESE are the Words of Christ to his Apostle *Peter*, at the third Time of his appearing to his Disciples, between his Resurrection and Ascension. Sad were the Circumstances of parting between Christ and this Apostle. *Peter* had denied his Master, and that with Oaths and Curses; and Christ knew what *Peter* had been doing, as he had made him sensible by the heart-piercing Look which he gave him, when he had not a proper Opportunity of speaking to him. Doubtless both *Peter* himself, and the rest of the Apostles, had been expecting, that Christ would take some Notice of what had passed, and perhaps might wonder that he met them one Time after another and said nothing concerning it: yea, it may seem strange that *Peter* did not

F him-

himself go and make Confession to Christ. It is possible the Event of Christ's Resurrection being a new and unexpected Thing, had so filled them with Astonishment, that they were scarce in any suitable Composure of Mind, or knew what Sentiments to form of it; but whatever it was that kept him back, surely it must be great Kindness and Grace in Christ, both that he forbore speaking so long, and that when he did speak, it was with so much Gentleness. Indeed if *Peter* had continued in a Denial of Christ, or had discovered no suitable Remorse for what he had done, we may well suppose that Christ would, for his own Honour's Sake, and for a Warning to the rest of the Disciples, have given him some sharper Language; but he knew his sincere Repentance for his Fault, and the Disciples, it is most likely, had been Witnesses to the Bitterness of his Sorrow; and therefore, Christ only asks him, *Lovest thou me?* giving him hereby an Opportunity of declaring afresh his Love to him. This Question Christ three Times repeats, according to the Number of Times that *Peter* had denied him. It is very probable that Christ putting this Question the *third* Time, brought *Peter's* threefold Denial close upon his Conscience; for it is said, *Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third Time, lovest thou me?* He was grieved that he should give so sad and abundant Occasion, both for such a Question, and such a Repetition. All these Questions *Peter* answers in the Affirmative, with a solemn Appeal to Christ, as God omniscient for the Truth and Sincerity of his Love. But then — if Christ *three* Times questions *Peter* as to his Love towards himself, he also *three* Times confirms him in his Office of Apostleship; which must needs conduce greatly both to *Peter's* own Satisfaction, and the Satisfaction of others concerning him; for without some such

such Confirmation, might not a doubt easily arise, both in his own Breast, and in the Thoughts of others concerning him, whether *he* were fit to be a Preacher of Christ, and a Builder up of his Kingdom? and whether he would be owned by Christ as such, *who* had so sinfully and shamefully denied him? Now the Ground of all such Doubt was effectually removed, by this clear and repeated Establishment in his Office, by Christ himself; and it might be for this Reason, among others, that Christ chose to speak to *Peter* about this Matter, in the Presence of the rest of the Disciples, rather than alone. *Jesus saith unto him, Feed my Sheep.* Who are meant by Christ's Sheep, and how they are to be known, we may learn from Christ's own Words, *John x. 27. My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* These are to be fed by dispensing Christ's Word and Ordinances to them.

The Text being thus explained, many Observations might be raised from it for general Use: as for Instance, that our Love to Christ, is a Matter frequently and seriously to be enquired into, and more especially by those, who, through their Falls and Miscarriages, have given more than ordinary Occasion for its being questioned, both by themselves and others — That Christ must sometimes speak *once, twice, yea, and a third Time*, before our Souls are brought into a suitable Frame — That a true Christian must not be satisfied, that he pass among Men for a Lover of Christ, but he must be able to appeal to the great Searcher of Hearts, for the Truth and Sincerity of his Love. Finally, that seeing Searching of Hearts was in the Old Testament, ever spoken of as the Prerogative of the only true God, we may conclude, that the Apostle *Peter* was fully persuaded of Christ's true and proper Godhead, when

he thus addresses him, *Lord, thou knowest all Things.* But there are *two* Observations yet remaining, which are more suitable to the Occasion of our present Meeting; which therefore I chuse to insist upon, as Time will permit.

First, That it is a principal and necessary Qualification of one that is to preach Christ to others, that he be a Lover of Christ himself: *Lovest thou me? Feed my Sheep*; intimating, that none but such as truly love Christ are fit for that Office.

Secondly, If the Ministers of Christ would show their Love to him as Ministers, it must be by diligent Attendance to this Work of feeding his Sheep. *Lovest thou me? Feed my Sheep.* q. d. Wouldst thou give a Proof and Discovery of thy Love to me, let it be by feeding my Sheep.

Doct. 1st. It is a principal and necessary Qualification of one that is to preach Christ to others, that he be a Lover of Christ himself.

Before I come to speak to this Doctrine, I shall beg leave to premise *two* Things to prevent Mistakes.

1. Though Love to Christ be a necessary Qualification for preaching him, yet it is not the only one. For besides that, there must be a good degree of Knowledge in all the principal Points of Religion, more than what is sufficient for a common Christian; and there must be Aptness to teach, and Gifts to help others in Prayer, &c. and there must be also an external Call, by which it may appear that we do not *run* before we are *sent*; that we do not lead Providence (as it were) but humbly follow it. Christ is here speaking to one that he had before sent forth to the Work of the Ministry.

2. When I say that Love to Christ is a necessary Qualification in a Minister, I do not mean that

that it is absolutely necessary in order to render his Ministrations effectual, or that they may be accompanied with a divine Blessing to those who attend upon them ; for it is, I think, universally granted, that God hath sometimes blessed the Ministrations of such as have not been true Lovers of Christ themselves to the spiritual Benefit of those who have sat under their Ministry ; it is Warrant enough for the People to look for the Blessing of God upon the Labours of their Minister, if there be nothing outwardly appearing, either in his Entrance into, or Discharge of the Work and Office of the Ministry, but what is consistent with the Rules and Directions of the Word of God. When therefore I call Love to Christ a *necessary* Qualification in a Minister, I mean that it is necessary to the right and comfortable Discharge of his Duty, in respect of himself, and also to make him a true and acceptable Minister in the Sight of God : And I may add, for the most part of his People too. — But of this more hereafter.

These Things being premised, I come more immediately to speak to the Doctrine observed. And in speaking to it, I would

I. Offer some Things concerning true and right Love to Christ in general.

II. Show on what Account Love to Christ is so needful in a Minister of the Gospel.

I. I would offer some Things concerning true and right Love to Christ in general. And that I may observe some Method herein, I shall speak something, 1. Concerning the Object of this Love. 2. The Kinds of it. 3. The Properties of it.

1. Concerning the Object loved, I would observe, that it must be a known Christ, and an entire Christ.

1.) It must be a known Christ. There are some ignorant Persons that pretend great Love to Christ, and yet know little or nothing who, or what Christ is; and where, to this Ignorance is added deluding Enthusiasm, there may be joined to such Profession of Love, even Extasies and Raptures, and all without being able to give any tolerable Account of what the Scripture makes known concerning him: True Love to Christ must be founded in Knowledge. There must be *some* speculative or notional Knowledge, though that of it's self, even in the highest degree, is far from being sufficient; for there must be also an inward and experimental Knowledge; there must be a Knowledge of Christ by the *Revelation* of the Spirit. *Ephes. i. 17.* there must be a knowing Christ, so as to esteem and love him, to account all Things as *Dross* and *Dung* in Comparison of him, so as to dispose us to give ourselves into his Hands as our only Saviour and Lord. It is *such* a Knowledge, that every true Christian hath, and consequently every faithful Minister likewise; but whoever hath it, never attained to it by Reading and Study; for it is the immediate Work of the Spirit of God, and proceeds from his free Grace and everlasting Love. *Gal. i. 15, 16.* *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen, immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood.*

2.) It must be an entire Christ, Christ in his whole Person, God as well as Man; to divide Christ is to destroy him; to pretend Love to Christ, and at the same time to rob him of his greatest Glories, doth not appear consistent. Christ in his whole Person, must be the Object of our Love; and so must Christ in all his Offices, both as our
Prophet,

Prophet, Priest and King ; Christ with his Righteousness, with his Laws, and with his People (who are his mystical Body) and with his Cross.

2. I would say something concerning the Kinds of Love to Christ, *viz.* Habitual and Actual. By *habitual* Love to Christ is meant, when a Principle of Love is so wrought in the Heart by the Spirit of God, as that there is an Ability and Readiness to exercise it on proper Occasions. Thus a Man may be said to have Reason habitually even when asleep, because he hath Power and Ability when awake to use and exercise it. *Actual* Love is when the inward Habit is brought forth into Act and Exercise; when from the Meditation of what Christ is in himself, or hath been to us, we feel our Hearts and Affections drawn forth towards him. Now, though such as have not for the present this actual Love of Christ, or Love to him in immediate and sensible Exercise, should not however merely for this reason conclude, they have it not in the Root or Habit; yet it should be the Care and Concern of every true Christian, and of every Minister of the Gospel more particularly, to have the one as well as the other. It remains that something be said,

3. Concerning the Properties of true Love to Christ. True Love to Christ is *sincere*; is not in Words and Profession only; it hath its Seat in the Heart, and hath a proper Influence on the Life and Actions. Again, it is *superlative*; it suffers no created thing to stand in Competition with him; *He that loveth Father, Mother, &c. or even his own Life more than me, saith Christ, is not worthy of me.* Matt. x. 37. And to mention no more, it must be *constant*; whom Christ loves *he* loves to the End; and they that truly love Christ will love *him* to the End also.

II. I proceed to shew on what Account true Love to Christ is so necessary in a Minister of the Gospel; let be first observed, that I am not here to speak of the Necessity of Love to Christ, to the carrying on a Work of Grace in his own Soul as a Christian, but only in Respect of his Character and Office as a Minister. The Necessity then of true Love to Christ in a Minister of the Gospel, as such, I shall endeavour to make appear under the *two* following Heads, which have been before hinted. 1. It is necessary in order to the right and comfortable Discharge of his Duty, in respect of himself. 2. It is necessary in order to his being accepted of God.

1. True Love to Christ is necessary in a Minister of the Gospel, in order to the Discharge of his Duty in a right and comfortable manner as to himself. This will sufficiently appear in the following Particulars; wherein will be shewn the great Usefulness of the true Love of Christ to a Minister (as such) as a Grace in the Hand of the Spirit.

1.) It is a constant Spring of Action or first moving Principle; there are many other Things that may set a Minister's *Head* and his *Hands* at Work, but Love to Christ will set his *Heart* on Work; and unless a Minister's Heart be engaged in what he does, it is all as nothing in the Sight of God. And then — as Love to Christ is a Spring of Action, so it is a *constant* one; other Motives may change and lose their Force and Power, but where this is, it will abide.

2.) It is a useful Guide in many doubtful Cases. Our principal Guide indeed is the Word of God; and to set up Love to Christ on a level with this, is no better than Enthusiasm, and may lead us into a thousand Errors. What I mean, is no more than this, that in many Cases which may happen, where

where we cannot easily get clear Determination from the Word, true Love to Christ in its due Exercise, may be of great use to direct and establish us in a right Course. It will take away the Force of many Prejudices that might otherwise hinder the Clearness of our Sight, and as it were cast a Mist before our Eyes. But this may lead us to a third Particular.

3.) It is a good Antidote against many powerful Temptations ; I shall take liberty to instance in some:

And the *first* Temptation I would instance in, is the Temptation to Pride. The Applause of Men is apt to have a great and undue Influence ; this is that which tempts some to turn off from the Simplicity of the Gospel to Words of Man's Wisdom ; because nothing is admired by the most, or at least by the greatest of those to whom they preach, but what is deduced from Reason as its Original, or at least tried by that as the Standard ; but Love to Christ will guard against such a Temptation, and direct to a contrary Course, as the Apostle *Paul* found by Experience, 1 Cor. ii. 1, 2. *And I Brethren, when I came to you, came not with Excellency of Speech, or of Wisdom, declaring unto you the Testimony of God ; for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* But then — as there are some Hearers that are all for Reason, or what is falsely so called, so there are others, through Mercy, that are for hearing of Christ ; and when a Minister seeks Applause from such, he will be much in preaching him ; but in this Case, Self is at the Bottom of all, and so long as a Minister gets the Esteem and good Word of his Hearers, his Concern is at an End. *Phil. i. 15. Some indeed preach Christ even of Envy and Strife, Ver. 16.* The one preach Christ of Contention ; they contend who

shall be most admired and followed, but Love to Christ will deliver in this Case likewise from the Snare of Pride. We read 1 Cor. iii. 4. that *some* were for *Cephas*, or *Peter*, *some* for *Apollos*, and *some* for *Paul*; but mark how careful the Apostle is, that the Honour and Praise should all be borne away from himself and his Brethren to Christ, Ver. 5. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but Ministers by whom ye believe, even as the Lord gave to every Man?* If Ministers have true Love to Christ, and in due Exercise, it will give them comparatively little Satisfaction, that their Hearers praise them; but their Delight will be when they praise *Christ*, and that both with their Lips and Lives. It is highly useful, and well worth a Minister's Pains to cultivate the Love of Christ in his Soul, were it only to guard him against this Temptation; as we shall be sensible, if we consider how vile and loathsome a thing Pride is in the Eyes of God.

A *second* Temptation I would take Notice of shall be the Temptation to Covetousness; *Demas hath forsaken me*, saith St. Paul, *having loved this present World*. But let Love to Christ be in proper Exercise, and earthly Things will be comparatively little esteemed; let our Hearts be set on pleasing Christ, who hath called us to be *Soldiers*, and it will be a great help to keep us from being *intangled with the Affairs of this present Life*, either as to our Hands or Hearts.

A *third* Temptation I would observe, is the Temptation to Men-pleasing, or an undue prizing their Favour, and fearing their Displeasure, which may lead to the Neglect of the faithful Discharge of our Duty, both to Christ and them; but Love to him will greatly take off the Force of this Temptation: we shall think with ourselves thus; are we solicitous to please Men, out of the

Regard we have to *them*? and have we not a greater Regard to Jesus Christ? And doth not he deserve to be pleased by us? Is it not better to displease Men, than by pleasing them, to displease Christ? Hath not he deserved more at our Hands, infinitely more than any Man upon Earth can possibly do? And there is this further Consideration to be remembered herein, that wherever it is our Duty to displease Men by pleasing Christ, it is where it would be more for their Hurt than their Good, that we should please them. The Apostle Paul was an Example unto us, in this Case too, as well as in the foregoing: *For do I now persuade Men or God? Or do I seek to please Men? For if I yet pleased Men, I should not be the Servant of Christ,* Gal. i. 10.

A *fourth* Temptation I would make mention of, is the Temptation to Anger, Frowardness, and Personal Resentments. When any of our Hearers may carry it in our Opinion, or even in reality, disrespectfully to us, there is oftentimes a strong Temptation to lay aside true Love and hearty Concern for them, and to behave towards them with Contempt or Severity; but Love to Christ is a powerful Guard against this Temptation likewise: Of which again the Apostle Paul is an Instance, *2 Cor. xii. 15. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.* And in the Epistle to the Galatians, we read, that they counted him their Enemy, because he told them the Truth; but such was his Love to Christ, that he overlooked all, and retained a true Affection for them, if by any Means he might regain them to his Lord and Saviour. *My little Children, of whom I travail in Birth again, until Christ be formed in you,* Gal. iv. 19.

The *fifth*, and last Temptation I shall instance in is, the Temptation to Formality and Customariness, in religious Exercises. We are so much engaged in reading and studying the Word of God, in Prayer with others, &c. that we are apt to grow more dead and indifferent towards such Employments; and there is something even in our Natures as Men, that leads to this. For as on the one Hand, Novelty in any thing much affects us; so the long Use of it makes us more dead towards it; and a wicked Heart, and our constant Enemy the Devil, will join in with Nature in this Case. But the Love of Christ kept warm in the Soul, will mightily guard against this Temptation; it will give Life to our private Meditations and publick Performances; we shall seek for, and desire Communion with that Jesus whom we love, as well as lead others in the Duties of Worship, as our Place requires of us. Here I shall beg leave to recite a Passage from a Sermon of Mr. *Trail's*, in the *Morning Exercises*, on the Question, “ *How may a Minister best win Souls?*” Take heed unto thyself, saith he, that thou be a lively, thriving Christian; see that all thy Religion run not in the Channel of thine Employment. It is found by Experience, that as it fares with a Minister in the Frame of his Heart, and thriving of the Work of God in his Soul, so doth it fare with his Ministry, both in its Vigour and Effects. A carnal Frame, a dead Heart, and a loose Walk, make cold and unprofitable Preaching. And how common is it for Ministers to neglect their own Vineyard? When *we* read the Word, we read it as Ministers, to know what we should *teach*, rather than what we should *learn* as Christians. Unless there be great Heed taken, it will be found, that our Ministry and Labour therein may eat out the Life of our Christianity;

“ not

“ not that there is any Discord betwixt them, but
 “ rather a friendly Harmony, when each hath
 “ it's Place and Respect. The honest Believer
 “ meditates, that he may excite his *Grace*, and
 “ Ministers too often meditate only to encrease
 “ their *Gifts*. When we preach, the sincere
 “ Hearer drinks in the Word, and it may be, we
 “ seldom mix Faith with it, to grow thereby. O
 “ how hard is it to be a Minister and a Christian,
 “ in some of these Acts! We are still conversant
 “ about the Things of God; it is our Study all
 “ the Week long: This is our great Advantage;
 “ but take Heed to thyself, lest ordinary Medling
 “ with divine Things, bring on an ordinary and
 “ indifferent Impression of them; and then, their
 “ Fruit to thee, and thy Benefit by them, are al-
 “ most gone, and hardly recovered.”

4.) True Love to Christ, is a good Preservative
 from many dangerous Errors. As for Instance,

One dangerous Error, which the Love of Christ
 will help to keep us from falling into, is the Er-
 ror of denying his true and proper Godhead. It
 is true indeed, we must go by Scripture-Evidence,
 as to what we are to believe concerning Christ;
 but true Love to him, will put us upon seeking
 after, and rejoicing in the greatest, and most ho-
 nourable Testimonies concerning him, and not
 upon endeavouring to sink or lessen them.

Another dangerous Error, which true Love to
 Christ will help to keep us from is, the denying
 the Importance of the Belief of Christ's true and
 proper Godhead, supposing him to be really pos-
 sessed of it. An Error this, which though of a
 more specious and harmless Appearance, yet is
 no less dishonourable to Christ than the former. If
 we have true Love to Christ in due Exercise, we
 shall be very far from thinking it a Matter of small

Importance, whether Christ be robbed of his infinitely greatest Glories, or adored for them.

A *third* dangerous Error, which true Love to Christ will help to keep us from falling into is, that of joining Works with Christ, in the Business of Justification.

If we truly love Christ, we shall be willing that he, and he alone, shall have the Honour of our Salvation, which the Scripture makes his due. We shall make mention of his Righteousness, and of his only.

5.) True Love to Christ, in a great Measure lightens the Burden both of Duty and Suffering. As for the Burden of *Duty*, it must appear evident to any that know the Extent of the ministerial Office, and the many Difficulties that attend the faithful Discharge of it, that it requires no small Labour and Pains; There is that in it which is laborious and painful to the Body, but this is the least Part. The Natural Weakness of the Body is something, but the sinful Corruption of Nature is a great deal more. This will be making many Remonstrances against a great Part of a Minister's Work, and secretly saying, spare thyself. Indeed, as hath been before hinted, corrupt Nature may *help us forward* in some Part of our Work, more especially the publick Part of it; if so be, we will set up a wrong End to ourselves, and put Self in the Room of Christ; but if the End be set right, and we take the right Rule to walk by, we shall find it a constant Enemy. It is painful walking with a great Clog about our Feet, or a heavy Burden upon our Backs; such is the Flesh to the faithful Minister, and that both as a Christian, and as a Minister; it makes his Work painful and laborious to him. But Love to Christ will greatly lighten this Burden: Like as when we have a strong Affection for any; that which we should think

think very hard to do for another, for whom we have no such Affection, we shall even take a Pleasure in doing it for *them*; and such an Effect will the due Exercise of Love to Christ have upon us in his Service.

And then there is also the Burden of Suffering.

And here there is the more *common* Burden of the many Discouragements and Disappointments that a Minister meets with, when he finds little or no Success, (at least in too many Instances) attending his Labours; yea, it may be quite the contrary falls out to what he desired and hoped for; but Love to Christ will be found a great Lightner of this Burden, (as Love to God proved to Christ in a like Case, *Isa. xlix. 4.*) So it will also be of that Burden of Suffering, which we may call *extraordinary*, I mean the Burden of Persecution, as we may see nobly exemplified in St. Paul, *Acts xx. 22—24.* *And now, behold I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the Things that shall befall me, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, that Bonds and Afflictions abide me; but none of these Things move me, neither count I my Life dear unto myself. So that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God,* Chap. *xxi. Verse 13.* Then Paul answered, *what mean ye to weep, and to break mine Heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* But to proceed,

2. True Love to Christ is necessary in a Minister, in order to the having his Person and Services accepted with God. This is so plain and evident, and I have also been so large on the former Head, that I shall not say much here. *If any Man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, saith St. Paul, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* If this be the Case

Care with any common Professor of Christianity, much more must it be so with a Minister of the Gospel.

The *Application* of the Subject chiefly belongs to us, my Fathers and Brethren, in the Ministry: Let us suppose Christ putting this Question to each one of us, as he did to *Peter*, in our Text; *Lovest thou me?* Yea, let us be often pressing home the Matter upon ourselves. O my Soul, lovest thou this blessed Saviour? What means then this Coldness in Duty? What means this Self-Seeking? What means this Fainting under Discouragements?

—— Let us be often calling ourselves to Account, to see from what Principles we act, and how far sincere Love to Christ is the Spring of what we do. Let us not think we go out of our Way, when we are turning our Meditations to the cultivating this Grace of Love to Christ in our own Souls; yea, and that even when we are ready to think there may be more need we should turn them to other Employments, I mean, to meditate for the Use of others; we may sometimes do more towards a right Preparation of ourselves, for the Service of the Sanctuary, by one Hour thus spent, than by a whole Day's Study. *Those* are like to be the best Sermons, that come from a Heart warmed with Love to Christ: When our Hearts have been thus engaged, we may perhaps also find our Tongues, or at least our Thoughts, like the Pen of a ready Writer. We often set forth to others, the Love of Christ to his People, in our publick Ministrations; let us be often applying this to our own Souls, *Gal. ii. 20. Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Let us thirst after the Manifestations of Christ, and his Love unto ourselves; and pray, that when he makes us Instruments of conveying Comforts to others, he would not leave us destitute of such Mercies: The be-

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lieving Contemplation, and especially the sensible Enjoyment of Christ's Love to us, will best kindle and keep alive in our Souls, the blessed Flame of Love to *him*; and we should soon find, and others would also soon find the good Effect of the Increase of such a Frame within us. *The Love of Christ constraineth us*, 2 Cor. v. 14.

But it is more than Time I should come to the second Doctrine, on which I must be very brief.

Doct. II. If Ministers would shew their Love to Christ, as such, it must be by feeding his Sheep. *Jesus saith unto him, feed my Sheep.*

In speaking to this Doctrine, I might shew, with what the Sheep, or People of Christ, must be fed by their Ministers, *viz.* with the pure Doctrine of God's Word; which is useful *for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness* — With a due Administration of all divine Ordinances — With their own, and other Experiences agreeable to the Word.

Thus *St. Paul*, when he would check a proud Spirit in the *Corinthians*, relates to them what himself had experienced, when in Danger of this Sin, 2 Cor. xii. I might shew in the *second Place*, in what manner Ministers must feed their Flocks, *viz.* WISELY or judiciously; giving Milk to Babes, and strong Meat to those that are of full Age, and that are more exercised. *I have fed you with Milk and not with Meat, for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able*, 1 Cor. iii. 2. *but strong Meat*, (i. e. the deeper and more sublime Doctrines of the Gospel, as by Milk are signified those that are more plain) *belongeth to them that are of full Age, even those who by Reason of Use have their Senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, Heb. v. 14. DILIGENTLY: in Season and out of Season, both in publick and in private. *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable*

fitable to you, but have shewed you, and taught you publickly and from House to House, Acts xx. 20. WILLINGLY: Feed the Flock of God, which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof, not by Constraint, but willingly, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind, 1 Pet. v. 2. AFFECTIONATELY: but we were gentle among you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her Children, so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own Souls, because ye were dear unto us, Thes. ii. 7, 8. CONSTANTLY: Take heed unto thyself and to thy Doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee, 1 Tim. iv. 16. The Hireling fleeth, because he is an Hireling, and careth not for the Sheep, John x. 13.

I might in the *Third Place* give some Reasons why Ministers should thus shew their Love to Christ, by feeding his Sheep; but I shall mention only this one, namely, because Christ's Heart is so much set upon their Welfare. Let us view Christ as undertaking to the Father for their Salvation; let us view him as becoming incarnate, suffering, and dying in their Stead; let us view him as bearing their Names upon his Heart in Heaven, and making continual Intercession for them: Finally, let us view him as preparing Mansions of Glory for them, and his being even unsatisfied, as it were, till he hath got them with himself, *John xvii. 24.* And do not all these Things, convince us how much Christ's Heart is set upon the Welfare of his People? Now, we know how it is with ourselves, when we have a very tender Affection for any, we love those that shew an Esteem for them, and do them any Kindness; even so will Christ take it kindly of any, that discover a true and hearty Affection for his redeemed ones; we read in *Mat. xxv.* that he will take any Kindness that is shewn,

shewn, even to the *Bodies* of his Saints on his Account, as if it were done to himself; and surely he is more pleased with Kindness shewn to their *Souls*, their better Part. Now, from whom shall he expect this, if not from those whom he hath put into an Office for this very Purpose, and bestowed suitable Gifts upon them? Is Christ's Heart so set upon his People and their Welfare, and shall not this draw forth our Hearts and Affections to them? Is it not enough to make us love them, and do our utmost for them, to see how *Christ* loves them, and what *he* hath done, is doing, and will still further do for them? *Jesus said unto him, feed my Sheep, q. d.* if thou wilt shew thy Love to me, let it be by feeding my Sheep.

Thus far, what I have spoken, chiefly concerns Ministers: It may be proper before I conclude, to speak a Word or two to those that attend on our Ministrations, or to those whom Christ here calls his Sheep.

1. You may take Notice from what hath been spoken, that you stand in great Need of being fed. Christ would not have been so solicitous about this, if there were not great and continual Need of it. Look into yourselves therefore, and see what Sense you have of your spiritual Necessities. Alas! how easy can too many be, without the preaching of the Word and Administration of Ordinances! Were it not for Custom and Fashion-Sake, they could turn Sabbath-Days into Working Days, and Opportunities for enjoying Communion with God, into Times for finding their own Pleasure: Such plainly shew, that they are not Christ's Sheep, at least that they have never yet been brought into his Fold. Christ's Sheep find the Want of Ordinances, for the preserving and carrying on the divine Life in their Souls, as much as they stand in need of Food, to sustain the natural

tural Life; yet most even of *these* have need to be called upon to search more into their spiritual Wants — Those that see most sensibly their need of Ordinances, are likely to profit most by them.

2. Take Notice of, wonder at, and rejoice in the Kindness which Christ hath for you, and the Care he takes of you. He is the great Shepherd, and it is he that provides and qualifies Under-Shepherds; and you see how he makes it a Mark or Trial of their Love to himself, that they are careful over you; and when they would humbly present their Love and Affection to him, he doth, as it were, give all back to you. You must have the Use and Benefit thereof. Say then with the Psalmist, *Psal. xxiii. 1. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, &c.* The Word, Ministers, Ordinances, and the Spirit working with and by these, all come from your great Shepherd, and are the Marks and Fruits of his constant and affectionate Love to you; O hear Christ's Voice, and follow him.

3. Think what you are thus fed and maintained for; is it, that you may live to please yourselves, to please the Flesh, to satisfy carnal Desires, to seek the great Things of the World for yourselves? Surely, no; but it is, that you may *adorn the Doctrine of God your Saviour*, by *denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in the World*; that you may behave yourselves in your several Places and Relations, as becomes the Disciples of a meek and holy Jesus. The Work of the Ministry is for *the perfecting the Saints*, Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13. *viz.* that their Graces might be more perfect, and their Duties more perfect, that they may more nearly resemble Christ their Head. And if this Fruit be found upon you, then there is another Thing for which Christ is bestowing all this present Care

about you, namely, that you may be trained up for Heaven, and everlasting Glory there. Ordinances upon Earth are to fit you for that World and State, where Ordinances shall be no longer needed. Ministers are to feed you now, but Christ himself will feed you hereafter, and that in a very different manner, *Rev. vii. 16. 17. And they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat ; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living Fountains of Water, and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.*



Mr.

about you, namely, that you may be united to
Mr. Hart, and continuing Giver of the same
ances upon earth, as to be for the World
and the same Order shall be no longer
and the same are to be you now, and shall
marked with your brother, and that in a
very different manner, &c. vi. 16. 17. and the
it shall be as much, neither will any more
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at the same, and shall lead him into the same
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Mr. *PEARSALL*'s CHARGE

TO

Mr. *ROOKER*

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Mr. *Pearfall's* Charge, &c.

My Reverend and Dear Brother;

AS you have seemed with a peculiar Seriousness to enter upon and pass through the Work of this Day; so I dare say, it is with a peculiar Pleasure, that your Fathers, Brethren and Friends, have attended to it, and borne their Share in it.

The Province which is allotted me, is too important to be entred upon without Solemnity and Fear. I need the Charge and Exhortation to my own self, which I am about to administer unto you. I am too sensible of my Infirmities, not to think I greatly want *Apologies*; and I fear before I have closed, many will be of the same Mind. But the Work is actually put into my Hands; the Call to it is providential; I would therefore gird up the Loins of my Mind, and address myself to it with a humble Dependance on Divine Grace.

I pretend not to instruct; much less to dictate; but I would humbly be your *Remembrancer*; and assure you I shall speak nothing to you, but what I would first speak to my ownself; nor lay any Burthen upon you, but the Yoke of Jesus; and what I would gladly take upon my own Shoulders; and here, if I know my own Heart, I may

I

ap;

appeal with the Apostle, *God is my Witness whom I serve with my Spirit in the Gospel of his Son* *.

I dare say, my good Brother, you would choose, that I make use of great Plainness of Speech. I will do so; earnestly desiring, that as we have been Witnesses this Day of your solemn Entrance upon this sacred Work, so we may be Witnesses of your Faithfulness and Success, and of your Reward and Crown in the Day of our Lord Jesus. Now, that it may be so, I would address myself to you from

ACTS XX. 28. former Part.

Take Heed to yourselves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers.

YOU know very well, that these are the Words of the Apostle *Paul* to the Elders, or Bishops, or Ministers of the Church at *Ephesus*; and they not only deserve your serious Regard as they dropt from *his* Mouth, and were addressed to Persons of your Character, but as they are the Fruit of *long Experience*, and contain in them his *parting* Advice. He was strongly apprehensive he should see their Face no more; and as this Intimation filled their Hearts with a pious Sadness, so the Thought, no doubt, excited in the Soul of our Apostle a peculiar Solemnity, and withal a holy Earnestness, that what he should say might have its proper Weight upon them, entered deep into their Hearts, and be found fastened *a Nail in a sure Place*, after he was dead and gone. And how could even an inspired Apostle have comprehended more in a few Words, than he hath done *here*; when he says, *Take heed to yourselves and to the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath*

made you Overseers? And if you, my Brother, would approve yourself faithful to him who hath put you into the Ministry; if you are under any Concern (as I doubt not, you are under a deep one) to be a trusty Steward in your Lord's House; then,

First, Take heed to yourself. Now this includes several Particulars.

1.) See to it, that you cultivate Religion in your own Soul. As he who is devoid of a Work of Grace upon his Heart, can never make a good Minister of the New Testament, so the *personal Holiness* of such an one will be apt to enter far into his *publick Character* and *ministerial Labours*.

I trust, the Lord hath called you by his Grace; but yet remember, that the great Apostle was not without laying a holy Caution upon himself, *lest after he had preached to others, he himself should be a Cast-away* *. Have you Grace? Has it made you a new Creature, and quickened you to a Life Spiritual and Divine? Grow in Grace. As every Christian, so especially every Minister should take great Pains to maintain and improve vital Religion in his own Soul; to beat and keep down every sinful Propensity, and to blow up the Spark of every good Motion enkindled. And here give me leave to inculcate this upon you, from the Words of the venerable Dr. Owen †. “ Consider the Calling of the Ministry. The Work
“ and Duty of it call on those that are employed in it, to have their Minds and Thoughts
“ conversant about spiritual and heavenly Things.
“ They are to study them, to meditate on them,
“ to commit them to Memory, to speak them
“ out to others. It will be said, surely such Men

I 2

“ must

* 1 Cor. ix. 27.

† In his Discourse on the Grace and Duty of being Spiritually-minded, p. 180 and 181.

“ must needs be *Spiritually-minded*. If they go
 “ no farther than what I have mentioned, I say,
 “ they must needs be so, as *Printers* must needs
 “ be *learned*, who are continually conversant a-
 “ bout *Letters*. A Man may with great Industry
 “ engage himself in these Things, and yet his
 “ Mind be most remote from being *Spiritual*.
 “ The Event doth declare, that it may be so,
 “ and the Reasons of it are manifest. It requires
 “ as much, if not more Watchfulness, more Care,
 “ more Humility, for a Minister to be *Spiritually-*
 “ minded in the Discharge of *his* Calling, than
 “ to any sort of Men in *theirs*; and that as for
 “ other Reasons, so because the Commonness of
 “ the Exercise of such Thoughts, with their De-
 “ sign upon others in their Expression, will take
 “ off their Power and Efficacy; and he will have
 “ little Benefit by his own Ministry, who endea-
 “ vours not in the first Place an Experience in
 “ his own Heart of the Power of the Truths,
 “ which he doth teach unto others.”

Now, that you may guard against that which
 so endangers you; and may attain what is so ne-
 cessary, maintain daily Communion with the Lord;
 not only study as a Scholar, but meditate as a
 Christian upon the Things of God; preach to
 your own Soul every of the Sermons you deliver
 unto others. Be much in secret Prayer; let your
 Closet be an *Oratory* as well as a *Study*. Cultivate
 an habitual Seriousness. Often converse with
 a dying Redeemer; I do not mean *now*, as you
 are to preach him to others, but as *the Life*, you
 are to *live in the Flesh*, is to be by *the Faith of*
the Son of God, who loved you, and gave himself
 for you*. Be frequently retiring to the Grave,
 and let your Meditations be among the Tombs;
 Remember, as *Peter* did†, that you must soon put
 off

* Gal. ii. 20,

† 2 Pet. i. 14.

off this Tabernacle, and give up your Account, once for all, both of your own personal Conduct, and Ministerial Trust. Such a Temper improved by such a Conduct will affect your Ministry, and make it a savoury and fruitful one beyond what you imagine. Your People will be apt to see a sweet and sacred Shine upon your Countenance, if before you come to the Tabernacle, you have been upon the Mount with God; while a Gravity merely affected, as it is the Object of the Divine Abhorrence, so *may soon and often has come to be* the Contempt of God's People.

And here I cannot but put you in Mind of our Fore-fathers in Nonconformity. They were remarkable for the Power of Godliness, and it evidently and eminently tended to their wondrous Success. And for my Part, I never expect that *their* Success will attend *our* Labours, till *their* signal Holiness inspires *our* Hearts. If Excellency of Speech and enticing Words of Man's Wisdom were the true Preparation for the Pulpit, many in our Day are better prepared than some of them: But if with solid Learning, substantial Piety is a grand Requisite, they were much better dressed for Sanctuary-Service. They seemed to feel what they spake. They were like *Aaron* with the holy Oil poured upon his Head, which flowed down to the *Skirts of his Garments*, and shed a sweet Perfume on all around him *.

2.)

* Our Fathers talked much of *pious Experience*, and have left their Writings of the same Strain behind them: They were surrounded with Converts and helped to fill Heaven apace, for *God was with them*. But I mourn to think that some are grown so degenerate in our Days, as to join their Names and their Works together in a common Jest, and to ridicule the sacred Matter of their Sermons, because the Manner had now and then something in it too mystical and obscure, and there is something in their Style unfashionable and unpolished. Dr. *Watts* in his Preface to his first Volume of Sermons.

2.) Take Pains to improve your *Gifts*.—The Apostle exhorts his Son *Timothy*, “ Stir up the “ Gift which is in thee *.” It signifies so to stir up your Gifts as the Fire is excited, either by raising it or blowing into it. You are to be a good Householder, who is ever to be drawing forth and ever to be laying up, that his Stores may not be exhausted. We rejoice in the Furniture, that you set out with ; but without Exercise and Study, Gifts will dwindle. I would therefore say to you as *Paul* to *Timothy* in another Place, “ Give Attendance to Reading ; neglect not the Gift that “ is in thee ; Meditate upon these Things ; give “ thyself wholly to them, that thy Profiting may “ appear unto all †.” The various Parts of Literature deserve your Attention, and no doubt will be an Entertainment to you. Preserve your juvenile Learning, and add to it by reviewing your academical Exercises. Here act the Part of the diligent Bee, who is never idle, but adds to her Store, not only for her own Livelihood, but the Use of others ‡. But, O my Friend, be especially progressive in your Study of and Acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures. It is worthy your serious Regards how many most famous for Learning, when their Judgments were most mature, and their Minds most serious and long Experience

* 2 Tim. i. 6. ἀναζωπυρεῖν, Sopitos Ignēs fuscitare flatu. Crit. Sacr. Donum Dei est viva quædam flamma in Cordibus nostris accensa, quam nituntur caro et Satan suffocare ; nos contra magis ac magis fovere et sopitam fuscitare oportet. Beza in Loc.

† 1 Tim. iv. 13.

‡ The Founder of *Corpus Christi* College in *Oxford*, calls his Foundation a Bee-Hive, (Alveareum) and the Students Ingeniosas Apes Dies Noctesque Ceram ad Dei Honorem & dulcissima Mella conficientes, ad suam & universorum Christianorum Commoditatem. Dr. *Plot's* Natural History of *Oxfordshire*, p. 184, 186.

perience of themselves, and Acquaintance with the World were added to all, betook themselves to the Study of the sacred Writings. I might here mention *Erasmus* ||, the great Retriever of ancient Learning; those Prodigies of Genius and Reading, *Grotius* and *Selden*, especially the former; the great *Salmasius* himself, who towards his last, desired to be a Student in *David's Psalms* and *Paul's Epistles*, as long as he lived; to these, I may add, the famous Mr. *Lock*. “ Thus (says an excellent “ * Divine still living) would I finish the Remain- “ der of my Days; having had a Taste of the “ politer Studies, may I devote my future Appli- “ cation to the lively Oracles! from other Pur- “ suits one may glean some Fragments of speci- “ ous Instructions, from this I trust to reap a “ Harvest of the sublimest Truths. Waft me “ then, O waft my Mind to *Sion's* consecrated “ Bowers; let my Thoughts perpetually rove “ through the awefully pleasing Walks of Inspi- “ ration; here grow those Heaven-born Plants, “ the *Trees of Life and Knowledge*, whose Fruits “ I may eat of and live for ever. Here flow “ those precious Streams of Grace and Righte- “ ousness,

|| How serious and pathetic are his Words: Nec quisquam facile credat, quam misere Animus jamdudum affectet ab his Laboribus in tranquillum Otium secedere; quodque superest Vitæ (superest autem vix brevi Palmus sive Pugillus) solum cum eo solo colloqui, qui clamavit olim, (nec hodiè mutat suam Vocem) *venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, Ego reficiam vos* — Nihil reperio in quo Mens mea libentius conquiescat quam in hoc arcano Colloquio.

* The pious and polite Mr. *Hervey*; concerning whom I have often thought of the Observation of one of the Ancients. “ Discant ergo Rabidi adversus Christum Canes; discant Eorum sectatores, qui putant Ecclesiam nullos Philosophos aut eloquentes, nullos habuisse Doctores, quanti et quales vivi eam extruxerint et ornaverint; et desinant Fidem nostram Rusticæ tantum Simplicitatis arguere, suamque potius Imperitiam agnoscant.

“ousness, whose living Waters, whoever drinks
 “shall thirst no more. What can the Fables
 “of *Grecian* Song, or the finest Pages of *Roman*
 “Eloquence, what can they exhibit comparable
 “to the matchless Prerogatives of Revelation ?
 “Therefore, though I should not dislike to pay
 “a Visit now and then to my Heathen Masters,
 “yet I would live with Christ and his Apostles ;
 “with the one I would carry on some occasional
 “Correspondence, but the other shall be my Bo-
 “som-Friends, my inseparable Companions, my
 “Delight, and my Counsellors.

Thus, my Brother, are you ever to be a Stu-
 dent ; and while you are *inclining your Ear unto*
Wisdom, and applying your Heart to Understand-
ing, do you take care to cry for Knowledge, and
*lift up your Voice for Understanding **, remembering
that God is the Father of Lights, and that from
him proceedeth every good and perfect Gift †.

3.) Often take heed to your governing Prin-
 ciples — Your stated Business will be to con-
 verse with spiritual Things ; but I should flatter
 you, if I should not tell you, it is possible you
 may degenerate so far as to mind the Concerns
 of your ministerial Profession, just as others do
 the Affairs of their secular Callings. Therefore
take heed to yourself. I hope you have entered the
 Ministry with sublimer Views, even a single Eye
 to the Glory of your God and Redeemer, and
 the Salvation of immortal Souls ; (I am very sure
 no other Principle will bear you out, or with any
 Comfort carry you on) but does not every Mi-
 nister feel, that he needs to be cautioned against
Self in various Shapes ? are there not Corruptions
 in you, even in you, which if not narrowly watch-
 ed and resolutely opposed, will be in the midst
 of all your Ministrations as *a dead Fly in the Oint-*
ment

* Prov. ii. 2, 3.

† James i. 17.

ment of the Apothecary * ? It is remarked in the Life of the famous Mr. *John Cotton* of *New England*, that he dedicated every Sermon to the Honour of his great Master, and subscribed these Words (*Tibi Domine*) *To thee O Lord*, to all his Sermons †. Remember (and you cannot recollect it, or impress it too often) that you have but one Thing absolutely to prosecute, even the Honour of him who hath put you into the Ministry, and the saving of Souls from Death. Seek not to please Men any farther than for the use of edifying; at least no farther, than is consistent with your grand Design. *If you seek to please Men* (if you stop there, or, if that is your governing Principle) *you are not the Servant of Christ* ‡. It is desirable to have the Respect of our Hearers; but remember, the smiling Countenance of your Lord, the Approbation of Conscience when you retire to your Closet, especially such a Testimony in your Favour in a Season of Sicknes, and the View of Death, will yield you a Joy, which is as much stronger as it is purer, than that which flows from common Fountains; a Satisfaction which the Applauses of the World cannot give, nor the capricious Censures of the World cannot rob you of. *Take heed* then, that *you preach not yourself* ||. Take heed, that *Covetousness, Pride, Conceit, Ambition*, do not enter the Pulpit with you §; nor *Self-applause*, upon any supposed Enlargement in your own Mind, or the Approbation of Fellow-Creatures attend you out of it.

4.) Take heed to yourself in respect to your Conversation — All Christians are to be the *Light of the World* †; you, Sir, are to be with

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John

* Ecclef. x. 1. † Vid. *Mather's Magnal*, Lib. III. p. 45.

‡ Gal. i. 10.

|| 2 Cor. iv. 5.

§ *Casti placent superis, purâ cum veste venite*.

† Mat. v. 14.

John Baptist, a burning- and shining Light †‡. If you would take heed to yourself, as our Apostle charges *Timothy*, then as in the Context, he says, *Be you an Example to Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Faith, in Purity* *. How apt are all to be Observant of the Conduct of Ministers? You *are like a City upon a Hill, that cannot be hid* †. Should they see that in your Behaviour which is wicked, which is vain and frothy, if they are pious, they will mourn; if they are weak, they will be stumbled; if they are wicked they will triumph. Whoever they are, the Name of Christ your Royal Master will suffer; the Reputation of the most honourable Character in the World will be beclouded; the Ignorant and Stupid be confirmed in their Prejudices against Religion, and your own Soul upon a Recollection, will feel a dreadful Stab ‡. *I speak not these Things to shame you, (so far from it) but as my beloved Friend I warn you* ‖.

But this is not all. It is my earnest Desire, and serious Exhortation, that your Conversation be more than *blameless*; let it be constantly *beneficial and instructive*; that you imitate the Sun, and spread Light and celestial Warmth, wherever you move. Be an Example of Meekness and Humility, of Charity and Benevolence, of a Readiness to give and forgive. Labour to be serious and yet pleasant; strict and yet affable; and withal exercising a religious Prudence in the whole of your Deportment. *Give no Occasion to them, who would seek Occasion to blaspheme that worthy Name by which you are called* §. Do not think it much to abridge yourself of that Liberty which is in itself lawful, when using that Liberty would be

‡‡ John v. 35.

* 1 Tim. iv. 12. comp. with 16.

† Mat. v. 14. ‡ Turpe est doctori cum culpa redarguit ipsum.

‖ 1 Cor. iv. 14.

§ Jam. ii. 7.

be a Snare or *an Occasion to fall in your Brother's way* *.

5.) Take heed to yourself in respect to Difficulties and Discouragements. Remember you are a Soldier, and you must endure *Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ* †. As the great Enemy bears an inextinguishable Malice to all the People of God, so far as permitted, he will with a peculiar Readiness and Rancor, level his invenomed Arrows against you ; as by your Office and daily Conduct you are obliged to oppose his Interests and pull down his Power, usurped over Souls. What Instruments he may employ, you know not. If the Edge of Penal Laws is not sharpened against you, as against our Fore-fathers ; and you are not committed to Prisons, or brought before Rulers for Christ's Name-sake, he hath other Methods of shewing his Enmity to the Redeemer, and the Gospel, and to you, on the account of the Relation you bear to them. He may stir up a Spirit of *Calumny* and *Reproach* ; reckon therefore, as better Persons before you, to *pass through good Report and bad* ‡. The Censures of mistaken Friends and the Rage of avowed Enemies may meet in you. Where you aim to be not only most *faithful*, but most *affectionate* and most *prudent*, you may meet with most Discouragement. These are trying Occurrences, but Duty is yours, Events are the Lord's. Remember the Treatment your Saviour and the Apostles met with before you ; go on steadily ; *your Judgment is with the Lord, and your Work with your God* §. Lean upon divine Wisdom and Grace ; carry every Thing to your Master ; *possess your Soul with Patience* §. Be not soon angry. If the Opposition comes from *Enemies*, say " I expect no better !" If from Christ's Friends

K 2

and

* Rom. xiv. 13.

† 2 Tim. ii. 3.

‡ 2 Cor. vi. 8.

§ Isa. xlix. 4.

§ Luke xxi. 19.

and yours, *let Love cover a Multitude of Faults* *. Approve yourself to him, *who sees not as Man sees* †, and then you may *account it a small Thing to be judged with Man's Judgment* ‡. Refer all to the appearing of the great Shepherd; when your Righteousness shall appear as the *Light*, and your Faithfulness as the *Noon-day*; and he shall give you such an Approbation as shall determine the Controversy, and silence every Reproach.

Thus *take heed to yourself*, my dear Brother; and need I seek for Arguments to engage you to this? Does not the Thing speak for itself? This I am sure of, that if you pay any proper Regard to the Eye of your Lord which is always upon you — The Honour of your Lord which is embarked with you — The Smiles of your Lord upon his faithful Labourers — The Frowns of your Master, which are ever against his wicked and slothful ones — If you have any regard to the Eye of the World, which is critical upon Ministers and their Conduct — If you are any way concerned about Satan, who will be ever malicious and insidious — If you are desirous of a steady Satisfaction and a holy Courage in your own Breast; and lastly, if you would have any Consolation or Reward, and hear those heart-refreshing Words “ Well done, good and faithful Servant ” — I say, if you have any due regard to these Things, I need not dwell upon other Motives; *if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, think on these Things* ||.

Secondly, *Take heed to the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an Overseer*. And I do not scruple to say, my Reverend Friend, if through Grace you are brought to take a proper heed to *yourself*, there is all the Reason to hope and expect, that you will also extend your Care to all those

* 1 Pet. iv. 8.

† 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

‡ 1 Cor. iv. 3.

|| Phil. iv. 8.

those who are *entrusted to you* ; as on the other Hand, he who is not a good Man can never be a good Minister. He who keepeth not his own Vineyard will never be thoroughly concerned about that of his Neighbour. So that the Apostle in my Text did with the highest Reason join these two Things together, and subject the Latter to the Former. Here Sir, give me Leave to enter into Particulars.

I. One main part of your Work, as a Minister of the New Testament, is to preach the everlasting Gospel? — And are you a Minister, and so separated to the Gospel of God? then *Woe unto you if you preach not the Gospel**. But it is not enough that you preach ; see to it, that you preach aright ; but *who is sufficient for these things†* ? *Withhold no part of the Counsel of God‡*. More especially insist upon those Parts of the Gospel, which are most important.

In the general, your Business is *to preach Christ* ; for so says the Apostle, *we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord***. Set him forth in all those Lights in which the Gospel represents him ; in his divine and human Natures ; in his mediatorial Character and Offices ; and see that you preach him in these Articles, not as Matter of Speculation, but to draw all Men unto him, and to the high Esteem and most affectionate Veneration of him. Preach him, my Fellow-Labourer, as God hath exalted him, even as a *Prince* and a *Saviour*. Take pains to manifest the Savour of *him, whom to know is Life*

* 1 Cor. ix. 16. It is remarkable in the Life of that excellent Man Bishop *Usher*, that when he was promoted to the See of *Armagh*, he seemed to be jealous, lest his Promotion should cause him to forget the great End of his Ministry ; and therefore had these Words engraven round his Archiepiscopal Seal, *Ne mihi si non Evangelizem.*

† 2 Cor. ii. 16.

‡ Acts xx. 27.

** 2 Cor. iv. 5.

Life eternal §. Do this as the Friend of the Bridegroom and the Friend of Sinners. You know who it is *that determined to know nothing as a Preacher, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified* *†. And is there not the highest Reason to preach Christ frequently? Are you speaking to dead Souls, and can you speak of one so proper as of him who is Life? since *he that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life* |||. Of whom more suitably can you speak than of so able and wise a Physician, while you are discoursing to those who are under the most loathsome and dangerous Diseases! If he is the *Rock, the tried Stone, the Chief-Corner-Stone*, laid in *Sion*, for Sinners to build upon *; since he is the only Surety †, by whom their Debts can be paid; the only *City of Refuge* ‡ where they can be safe; the *Righteousness*, whereby they are to be justified ||; the *Fountain*, where they are to be washed †; the *Way* *†, in which distant Souls can be brought to God and Glory, there is the highest Reason why we should dwell much upon *Christ* in our Preaching.

Well then, invite Sinners to him and to an offended Majesty through him. As the Foundation of all, shew your uninformed, unconvinced Hearers the Need they stand in of a *Redeemer*; open frequently the Nature of Sin as a Breach of the divine Law, as exposing the Sinner to that dreadful and everlasting Curse, which is annexed to it **. Shew them that they have sinned; paint out in awful Colours the dreadful Precipice they stand upon the Brink of; that they are Slaves to their Lusts, and to *Satan* operating by them.

Then

§ John xvii. 3.

* 1 Pet. ii. 16.

† Rom. iii. 24.

*† John xiv. 6.

*† 1 Cor. ii. 2.

† Heb. vii. 22.

† Zech. xiii. 1.

** Gal. iii. 13.

|| John iii. 36.

† Heb. vi. 13.

Then open to them the Dolefulness of such a State, and their Inability to extricate themselves out of it. This will lead you to insist often on the Necessity of those Graces and Duties which the Apostle made the Sum of his Ministry, when *he testified to the Jews and also to the Greeks Repentance towards God and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* |||. And upon which are suspended so many and glorious Privileges. I say again, treat those Subjects often in your Sermons; open them clearly, and then press them pathetically.

When you* address yourself to Sinners sleeping in the Laps of their *Dalilabs* and their Enemies upon them, hanging over everlasting Burnings, and at a Distance from the only Saviour; speak to them as one in earnest, mourn over them from a Spirit of Faith and *Christian* Benevolence; touch all the tender Passions; put on Bowels of Mercy; draw Sinners with the Cords of Love; open the Treasures of Grace; pray and beseech them as in God's Name and Christ's Stead to be reconciled. At other Times put on the *Boanerges*, as a Son of Thunder cry aloud and spare not; lift up your Voice like a Trumpet; rouse the Fear of Sinners, till from the Apprehensions of Wrath they are brought to fly, as for their Lives. Do not dawb here with untempered Mortar; do not flatter, O do not be afraid of disturbing that Repose which arises from an Insensibility and fatal Opiates. Act in such an Affair with all the Faithfulness of a Steward, of a Herald, of an Ambassador; act in such a Manner, that you may have Comfort in your own Soul and you may looking upward say, *I am pure, from the Blood of all Men* **. Insist upon these *Capital* Points often; Impressions are hard to be made upon the Clods of the Vineyard; and if any are made, how easily do they fade and

evaporate *. There are some with whom you are to deal tenderly; sorrowful Breasts need a *Barnabas*; a wounded Spirit who can bear? Learn of your Saviour to *bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to such Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound; that you may give to them that mourn in Sion, Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* §.

Your Business also as a Preacher, will be to confirm the Wavering, to strengthen the Weak, to guard them against Backslidings, to build up in Knowledge and Holiness all that are Regenerated. Preach Duty to God and Man in all its extensive Circle. Affirm constantly that *every one who names the Name of Christ must depart from all Iniquity* †. And that *they who believe must be careful to maintain good Works* ‡, evince the Necessity, display the Beauty of Holiness, and exhort powerfully to follow

* I often call to mind the following Reflection of the incomparable Dr. *Bates*, which I would here transcribe, both to engage Ministers peculiar Diligence, and all Christians Prayers for them. "The Work of a Minister has its peculiar Dis-
" advantage; that whereas an Artificer, how curious and difficult
" soever his Work be, yet has this Encouragement, that what
" is begun with Art and Care, he finds in the same state in
" which it was left. A Painter that designs an exact Piece,
" draws many Lines, often touches it with his Pencil, to give
" it Life and Beauty, and though unfinished it is not spoiled
" by Intermision. A Sculptor that carves a Statue, though
" his Labour be hard from the Resistance of the Matter, yet
" his Work remains firm and durable. But the Heart of Man
" is of a strange Temper; hard as Marble, not easily recep-
" tive of heavenly Impressions, yet fluid as Water, those Im-
" pressions defaced in it. It is exposed to so many Tempta-
" tions, that induce an Oblivion of eternal Things, that with-
" out frequent Excitations to quicken and confirm its holy
" Purposes, it grows careless, and all the Labour is lost, that
" was spent upon it —." See his Funeral Sermon for Dr. *Manton*.

§ *Isai. lxi. 1, &c.*

† *2 Tim. ii. 19.*

‡ *Tit. iii. 8.*

follow after it *. Press practical Religion in all its Branches, personal and relative, in Heart and Life ; support your Exhortations with every proper Argument, and by annexing suitable Directions lead your People on in the Path of Duty. And as you will acquaint yourself with the State of your People, as an affectionate Friend and tender Minister, so you will adapt your Discourses occasionally to their Cases, as under spiritual Exercises, or providential Dispensations ; but yet in such a manner, as that they may be serviceable to others. Here divine Wisdom is profitable to direct.

One Thing more I must add, and that is, do not forget the Use of Examination in your Sermons. Our venerable Fathers dealt much this way ; they were skilful *Anatomists* ; but modern Preaching is almost an entire Stranger to it. Endeavour by the means of the Word to discover every Man to himself ; open the distinguishing Temper and Character of Saints and Sinners ; put them upon their Trial, and give to every Man his Portion.

In all your Entrances upon sacred Ministrations be devout and serious ; act as seeing him who is invisible † ; act as one that must meet his People before the Bar of God ; yea, as one *should* act, that expected never to return to his own House ‡. Aim at Clearness of Thought, Method and Expression. Lisp to Babes. It is hard to know, as it is sad to think, how ignorant many of your Hearers are.

* Heb. xii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 27.

‡ I have read of the old Lord Chancellor *Egerton*, that one Morning coming down Stairs to go to *Westminster-Hall*, he observed these Words wrote upon the Wall before him, *Tanquam non Reverfurus* (as if never to return ;) intimating how impartial he ought to be ; supposed to be wrote there by some one who had that Day an important Cause to be tried, and feared Oppression. It is a good Motto for every Pulpit, and the Hearts of those who ascend them.

are. Soar not therefore too high, as you have to do with those who are short-sighted; and yet if it may be, stoop in such a manner as that still the more judicious may find something to learn; at least may not be disgusted. Open with Plainness the Truths and Precepts of the Gospel, and press the latter with all Authority. I would that you should be as gentle as a Lamb, in your own personal Concerns; but when you are setting forth *Sin* and *Duty*, put on Zeal as a Cloak; raise your Voice in a way becoming the Dignity of the Lord you come from; and let all know what Christ said to his Apostles, and in them, to all his Ministers. “*He that beareth you, beareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and him that sent me **.”

II. As you are in publick to be God's Mouth unto the People, so you are to be theirs to God — *Prayer* and *Praises* are to be the *Sacrifice* and *Incense*, which must be offered up in God's Temple, and you are to be in some sense the *Priest* there. Let your Supplications be formed in Language plain and comprehensive; such as shall include the Wants, and assist the Desires of all. Order it so, that while you are their Mouth to God in his House, you may teach them insensibly how to pray in their own. Do not let your Supplications be presented to God, as the Heathens present theirs to their Deities, as *the Father of all Things*, but as *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and through him as the Father of Mercies. *Confess* Sin with Humility and Shame; lay yourself and your People very low; and be sure you do not omit in your penitential Abasement and Lamentation, the Corruption of Nature, the Plague of the Heart, that Body of Death, which

* Luke x. 16.

which the Apostle grieves for so feelingly, and which is the impoisoned Fountain of every actual Transgression.

When you enter upon *Thanksgiving*, do not forget to adore divine Grace for the *unspeakable Gift*, even Christ Jesus, an Example of perfect Purity, and universal Holiness; for him as a Sacrifice for Sin; for the Evidences of his Mission, the satisfactory Evidences we have of the Validity of his Undertaking, in his speedy Resurrection, his glorious Ascension into Heaven, and the Work he is carrying on at the Father's right Hand. Thus in a *Christian Assembly*, let *Christ* be never long out of sight, either in Prayer or Preaching.

III. There are also occasional Services of a public Nature — I should be too long, did I more than touch upon the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, to be administered so, as to represent the Love of a Saviour in the most agreeable affecting Light, and spread the Savour of it through the whole Soul; so as to edify Christians in their most holy Faith, confirm them in Holiness by the Constraints of his Love; and to comfort the Followers of the Lamb in the course of their Pilgrimage;

Baptism is also an Ordinance to be administered with all Seriousness according to the Rule of the Gospel. I must also add, that Christ's Family hath a Discipline annexed to it. None are to be accepted into the Society of the Faithful, or registered as Christ's Disciples, but those who seem to have received him and been received by him, by the credible Profession of his Name. And though I apprehend Church-Discipline is to be the Act of the Church, and none are to be received, or being once received to be rejected, but by the Church, yet it will fall upon you, my Brother, to preside, to counsel and give Advice how they

should act in Point of Duty and Prudence ; and consequently it will very much lie upon you to separate between the precious and the vile. Here you are to be actuated by nothing but the Honour of your Lord, the Welfare of Souls, and the Credit of the Christian Profession. No private Views, no personal Prejudices are in the least to have Place here.

IV. You are to bear about you a constant Concern for the Flock ——— Your Sion is to be written as upon the Palms of your Hands, and her Walls are to be continually before you. As a Shepherd, eye all your Flock, especially those who are most inclined to wander. Bind up the wounded, and strengthen those who are weak. Carry them in your Arms to the divine Footstool in Prayer. Let the Walls of your Closet testify your strong Affection for the Souls of your People. At proper Times single out their particular Cases, their distinguishing Circumstances. Lament their Weaknesses, sinful and imprudent ; entreat Strength to be communicated. Be anxious, if any are under Symptoms of peculiar Danger, and with strong Cries put them under the divine Protection. Intreat that the God of all Grace, who hath called them to his eternal Glory by Jesus Christ, would keep them by his mighty Power through Faith unto Salvation.

Take suitable Opportunities of *visiting* your People — Do it both in a way of *Friendship* and *Religion*. Do not overlook the Poorest. Adapt your Discourses to the Situation they and their Families are in. Do this especially in the Seasons of Affliction. It is *then* that they peculiarly need your Support, Advice and Exhortation. At these Times their Minds may be more open to serious Impressions, more ready to imbibe Instructions, Convictions and Quickenings ; and one would

chuse to apply the Seal, when the Wax is melted. And more especially still if you find that any are under Awakenings, that the Spirit of God hath roused the Conscience of any of your Hearers, then make all proper Haste; this is the critical Time, to preserve the Impression and yet to keep from Despondence; to direct their *Sorrow which is after a godly Sort into a Repentance not to be repented of* †; that their Goodness may not be as *Ephraim's, like the Morning-Cloud, and early Dew* ||.

If Reproofs are necessary upon any unbecoming Walk, let them not be withheld. But, O my Friend and Brother, how much Wisdom is requisite to discern the suitable Time and Manner of giving them? Let this Work be done as much as may be in private; and when your Passions and theirs are in their calmest Way; that they may not think themselves exposed or any Way hardly dealt with. What Affection should you evidence to their Persons? How far should a Reprover be from Anger, Wrath, and Evil-speaking? to be faithful and yet tender; to bear a proper Resentment against Sin, and yet a compassionate Respect towards the Sinner; to have the Meekness of the Lamb joined with the Courage of a Lion, is no small, no common Attainment. You will, Sir, in this need all the christian and ministerial Prudence that you are possessed of; and will often see the Need of Prayer to him, who is the Fountain of all Wisdom. And may you have much of that Spirit, which rested on your Royal Master and animating Head; *a Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, a Spirit of Counsel and Might, a Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord* *.

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* † 2 Cor. vii. 10.

|| Hof. vi. 4.

* Isa. xi. 2.

I may add, do all you can to preserve Peace among Brethren. As you the Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be a Pattern of Gentleness and Goodness, so if any that you are concerned with, seem to be contentiously inclined, intreat them to leave off Contention before it be meddled with. Wisdom must direct how to manage, according to concurring Circumstances: To neglect a little Difference at one Time, may be a fatal Connivance, like the Disregarding the Breaking forth of Water or Fire. To meddle too much, may at other Times bring upon you the Imputation of a Busy-Body, and exasperate the Wound, which your Desire is to heal.

In all may you shew the Care of a Shepherd, the Affection of a Brother, the Faithfulness of a Steward, the Tenderness of a Father, and the Humility of a Servant; remembering you are the Disciple of him, *who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister* †.

V. Let young ones, whom you will permit me to call the Lambs of the Flock, have more than a small Share in your Concern; inculcate upon Parents the Duty incumbent upon them of training up their Children in the Ways of the Lord. Such Exhortations are greatly needful at this Day; for how are the Souls of young ones neglected? Press every Branch of Family-Prayer, *reading the Scriptures*, and *Catechizing*. This latter Method of Instruction was formerly thought of great Consequence: I wish the present Generation of Professors were of the same Mind. By catechetical Instruction being set up in the Families of your Friends, Knowledge will be spread among the rising Generation. We often complain that we do but little good by our Ministry, and the
Occasion

† Mat. xx. 28.

Occasion for such Complaints is but too evident ; and is not the Ignorance of the Bulk of our Hearers, one great Reason ? for Want of a Foundation laid in an Acquaintance with the Principles of Religion, as set forth in many of our Catechisms from the Scriptures, the only Standard of divine Truth, our plainest Preaching is, I fear too much like speaking in an unknown Tongue. *Private Catechising in Families, will make Way for Ministerial ;* and I intreat and am ready to charge you that this Congregation may not be a Stranger to it. If I knew of any Composure of this Sort better than the ASSEMBLIES Catechism I would recommend it. Explain it to your young ones ; feed your Babes with Milk. *Let your Doctrine drop as the Rain in your publick Sermons. Let your Speech distil as Dew in your private Instruction, as the small Rain on the tender Herb, and as the Showers upon the Grass **. Let that Word which you have heard this Day inculcated, often sound in your Ears, “*Lovest thou me ! feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs †.*” Our young ones are the Nursery of our Vineyard, whence from Time to Time are to be transplanted those living Vines, which shall bring forth Fruit hereafter ; and when we are gathered to our People, and shall sleep with our Fathers, they are to *be a Seed to serve the Lord, and to be accounted to him for a Generation* ||.

But I shall be tedious. All that remains is to enforce this my Exhortation, that you may indeed *take Heed to that Flock, over which the Holy Ghost does make you an Overseer*. This I would do by a few Motives ; and O that I could do it effectually, first to my ownself, and then to you !

First,

* Deut. xxxii. 2.

|| Psal. xxii. 30.

† Referring to the Sermon.

First, Consider that the Honour of your God and Saviour depends upon the Fulfilment of your Ministry— If you carelessly permit Sinners to persevere in the Paths of Ignorance and Wickedness; if they go on to gratify their Lusts and refuse a Redeemer, and you give them no Disturbance; if they continue Rebels against God and Despisers of Gospel-Grace, and you sit easy amidst all, how shall Jesus see the Travail of his Soul?

Secondly, Consider your People as possessed of invaluable, immortal Souls — Labour to impress upon your own Heart the Worth of Souls, as unspeakably more precious than the Sun, Moon, and Stars that roll about you; and as hasting to an eternal World, and consequently as Borderers upon Heaven or Hell. A speculative Persuasion upon this Head is but little; let it be your Endeavour to study, pray and preach under a deep Sense, and a most affecting View of these Things. This will cause you very gladly to spend and be spent, for those whom you labour among. A lively Faith herein will put Spirit into your Ministrations, and be a Spring of Motion to all the Powers of Soul and Speech. While Faith is to you the Evidence of Things not seen, you will not much study the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but will rather chuse to speak with a Demonstration of the Spirit and Power; you will not anxiously hanker after the Applause of your Hearers, but will seek after those Arrows, which shot from the Gospel-Bow are most likely to reach the Heart. To hear a poor Sinner, before obdurate as the Adamant, now melting as the Wax, crying "What shall I do to be saved," will be more grateful to your Soul, than the capricious Praises of a Multitude. And here I cannot but subjoin the serious Observation and mature Reflection of that great Man Archbishop *Williams*. He had for many Years

Years made a mighty Figure as Dean of *Westminster*, Bishop of *Lincoln*, Lord-Keeper of the Great-Seal, and afterwards Archbishop of *York*; every one that knows his History, must be sensible that he bore his Crest high; but when he met with mortifying Strokes, and was brought to think seriously; he thus expressed himself to a grave Minister: " I have, saith he, passed thro' many Places of Honour and Trust, both in Church and State, more than any of my Order in *England* these seventy Years before: But were I but assured that by my Preaching I had converted but one Soul unto God, I should take therein more spiritual Joy and Comfort, than in all the Honours and Offices, which have been bestowed upon me *."

Thirdly, Consider the Souls you are speaking to as the Price of the Saviour's Blood.—This is the Argument, which the Apostle urges in the Words after my Text: "*The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.*" O what an Argument, says Mr. *Baxter*, is here to quicken the Negligent, and to condemn those that will not be quickened to their Duty by it! O, saith one of the ancient Doctors, if Christ had but committed to my Keeping one Spoonful of his Blood in a fragile Glass, how curiously should I preserve it! and how tender should I be of the Glass! If then he hath committed to me the Purchase of his Blood, should I not as carefully look to my Charge? O labour then to hearken to those Arguments of Christ, whenever you feel yourself grow dull and lifeless. Hear him saying, as Mr. *Baxter* goes on to descant upon the Place, " Did I die for them, and will not thou look after them? Were they worth my Blood, and are they not worth thy Labour? Did I come down from Heaven to Earth to seek and save that which was lost? and will not thou

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* Fuller's Eccles. Hist. of Britain, L. III. p. 228, - 31.

“ go to the next Door, or Street, or Village, to
 “ seek them? How small is thy Condescension to
 “ mine? I debased myself to this: but it is thy
 “ Honour to be thus employed. Was I willing to
 “ make thee a Co-worker with me, and wilt thou
 “ refuse that little that lieth upon thy hand?”

Fourthly, One thing more I would leave with your Conscience as your Remembrancer, my dear Brother, and that is the awful Account which you are to give Christ your Judge.—You know very well, that he who employs you as a Steward in his House, as a Labourer in his Vineyard, as an Ambassador in his Kingdom, as a Shepherd to his Flock, and now inspects all your Conduct, will call you before him, and reckon with you. How solemn is the Thought? and what a Charge doth it bring along with it? I will here repeat St. Paul's Words to *Timothy*, “ I charge thee before God,
 “ and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the
 “ Quick and Dead at his Appearing and King-
 “ dom, preach the Word, be instant in Season and
 “ out of Season, &c*.” Let this Thought impressed be instead of ten thousand Arguments to quicken you when dull and loitering, to make you faithful when Dangers stare you in the Face, to comfort you under all the Discouragements you may meet with from mistaken Friends or outrageous Enemies.

My dear Fellow-Soldier, the Day is coming, when you and I must have our hidden Principles laid open. Remember he who is to be your Judge, is the omniscient Jesus; and if he would have all *his Churches know*, sure he would have the Ministers of those Churches much more to know, *that he searches the Heart, and tries the Reins of all the Children of Men, to give unto every Man according to their Works*†. If you engage and persevere

* 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

† Rev. ii. 23.

with a serious Concern for his Honour and the Salvation of Souls, a *glorious Crown* awaits you, *when the chief Shepherd shall appear* ||. If you may look around upon many at that Day and say, “Ye are my Glory and Joy *; if you may turn to the Judge, and may humbly say, “Behold here I am, and the Children which thou hast given me†.” How bright a Day will it be? They that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever ||||.

But as Success is in the Hands of God, I would rather say, if the Judge of Quick and Dead does then approve you, if he proclaims you faithful before Men and Angels, and calls Mr. *Rooker* by Name to his affectionate Embrace, your Heart will feel a Joy that it was a Stranger to before. Those few Words, “WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT” will more than make Amends for all your Labours. If *Israel* is not gathered, yet you will be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord; and however the Event be in point of Success, you will be unto God a sweet Savour in Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish §.

On the other hand, which God forbid, if at that Day you are found to have engaged in the Work of the Ministry upon any base and sinister Principle; or if you are found to have betrayed the great Truths of Christ, to have made Light of Souls, to have been carried away by the Fear or Favour of Men, the Hopes of Gaining, or the Apprehensions of Losing; in a Word, if found slothful and wicked, Christ will treat you as such, and cast the unprofitable Servant into Darkness, where shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth *||.

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|| 1 Pet. v. 4.

Dan. xii. 3.

* 1 Thes. ii. 20.

§ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

† Heb. ii. 13.

*|| Mat. xxv. 29.

I would conclude all with a Passage of History, which perhaps, you may have read, as delivered not long ago in *London*, upon such an Occasion as this ||. A Divine in the former Part of the last Age, was preaching before an Association of Ministers, and in order to quicken their Regard to the Principle, End and Motive from which they acted, pointed to them the last and awful Day of Judgment; and having brought in Christ the Judge, as taking his Place on the Throne, he then, by an elegant *Prosopopæia*, represented him as calling his *Ministers* to an Account, examining how they had preached, and with what Views they had undertaken and discharged the Work of the Ministry — “ What did you
 “ preach for? I preached, Lord, that I might
 “ keep a good Living that was left me by my
 “ Father of one hundred and fifty, or two hundred Pounds a Year; which if I had not entered into Orders had been wholly lost, as to
 “ me and my numerous Family.” Christ says to him, “ Stand by, thou hast had thy Reward.” The Question is put to another, “ And
 “ what did you preach for? He answered, Lord,
 “ I was applauded as a learned Man, and I preached to keep up the Reputation of an excellent
 “ Orator, and an ingenious Preacher.” Christ’s Answer to him likewise was “ Stand thou by
 “ thou also hast had thy Reward.” — The Judge puts the Question to a third, “ And what
 “ did you preach for? Lord, says he, I neither
 “ aimed at the great Things of this World, though
 “ I was Thankful for the Conveniencies of Life
 “ which thou gavest me; nor did I preach, that
 “ I might gain the Character of a Wit, nor
 “ Man of Parts, or that of a fine Scholar; but
 “ I preached in Compassion to Souls, and to
 “ please

* At Mr. Gibbons’s Ordination.

“ please and honour thee ; my Design in preach-
 “ ing was, Lord, that I might win Souls to thy
 “ blessed Majesty.” Upon this the Judge called
 out “ Room, Men, Room, Angels, let this Man
 “ come and sit with me in my Throne, as I am
 “ set down with my Father in his Throne ; he has
 “ owned and honoured me on Earth ; and I will
 “ own and honour him through all the Ages of
 “ Eternity.” The Result of all then was, that
 the Ministers went home much affected ; resolv-
 ing that through the Help of God they would
 mind the Work of the Ministry more, and look
 better to their Aims and Ends ever after. My
 Prayer is, that a Sense of these Things may sit
 with a proper Weight upon your Heart and Mind ;
 and an Impression like what I have mentioned,
 may be carried away by, and ever remain, with all
 these my honoured Brethren in the Ministry upon
 this solemn Occasion assembled before the Lord.

E I N I S.



*Books lately published and sold by John Robinson
and George Keith.*

A *Gherly's* Britannic Constitution, or the Fundamental Form of Government in *Britain*, 2d edit.

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